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Alexander, Rose, and Watson

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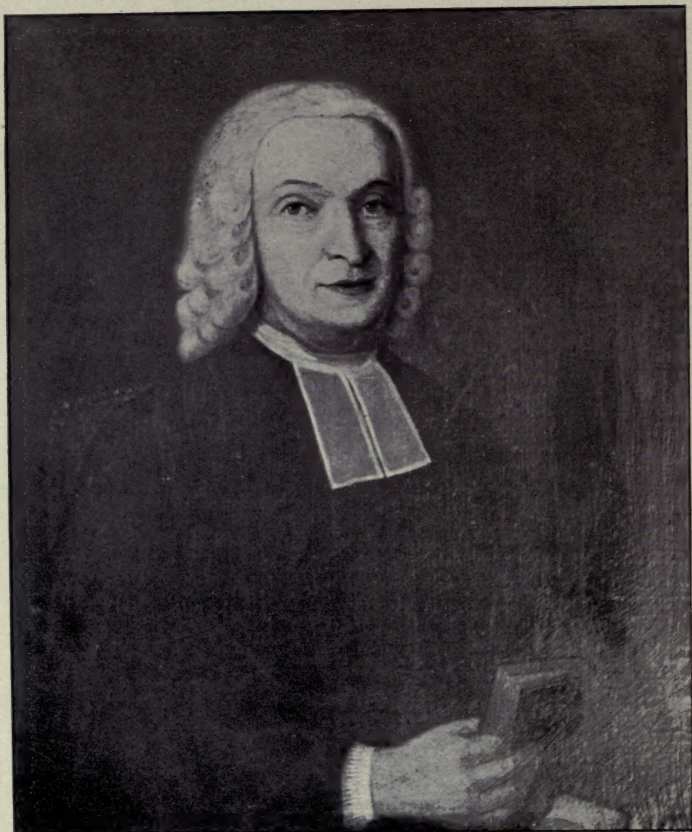




**THREE BISHOPS OF DUNKELD.**







BISHOP ALEXANDER.

*[From Original in possession of Rev. D. Moir, Alloa ]*

# Three Bishops of Dunkeld:

ALEXANDER, ROSE and WATSON.

1743—1808.

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## I.

The Life of the Right Rev. John Alexander,  
Bishop of Dunkeld.

1743—1776.

BY

Very Rev. GEORGE T. S. FARQUHAR, M.A.,

*Dean of St. Andrews, and Canon and Precentor  
of St. Ninian's Cathedral, Perth.*

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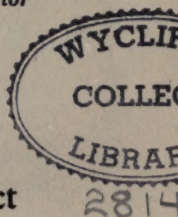
TO

The Right Rev. CHARLES EDWARD PLUMB, D.D.,  
*Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld, and Dunblane,*  
and to the Members of the Scottish Clergy Society.

---

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY  
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AND MR. MANN, SELKIRK.

1915.



Three Bishops of Dunkeld:

ALEXANDER ROSE and WATSON

1843-1893

The Life of the Right Rev. John Alexander

1843-1893

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Very Rev. GEORGE T. HARGREAVES, M.A.

45207937✓

The Right Rev. CHARLES EDWARD PLUM, D.D.

Bishop of St. Andrew, Dunkeld and Dunblane

and to the Ministers of the Scottish Clergy Society.

—

Printed at the Press of

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1893

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Authorities mentioned in the notes which are:—

- (1) Not included in the list given in *The Life of Bp. Watson*.
- (2) And not sufficiently described in the text or notes of the *Life of Bp. Alexander*.

*B.'s Kilmaveonaig*—"Facts and Fancies linked with Folk-lore about Kilmaveonaig," by Rev. Canon Bowstead.—Grant & Sons, Edin., 1915.

*Finavon*—i.e. MSS. at Finavon, Forfarshire.

*Dill*—"Episcopacy in Forfar, 1560-1910," by R. W. Dill.—M'Pherson, Forfar, 1911.

*Epochs*—"Epochs of Scottish Church History," by various writers, Edinburgh—S. Giles' Printing Co., 1897.

*Intrusion*—The same as "An Instructed Historical Account," for which see page 25.

*Lawson's Memoir*—"Memoir of the Life and Times of Bishop Sage," prefixed to "The Works of Bishop Sage."—Spottiswoode Society, Edin., 1844.

*Lexicon*—This is a private volume of my own, in which I have written copies of many old MSS.

*Philip*—"The Church in Kirriemuir from A.D. 1560," edited by Rev. John A. Philip, M.A., Scottish Clergy Society.—Grant & Sons, 1909.

*Wilkinson*—"Some Chapters of Church History in Buchan," by Rev. Canon Wilkinson, Peterhead—Scrogie, 1914.

There are also countless instances in which no references are given. In these cases it is to be understood that the authority is to be found in the *Bishop Alexander MSS.* in Coates Hall, Edinburgh, and the only way to find the particular MS. desired, is to note the date given in the text of this volume and to discover the MS. correspondingly dated. For access to these and to the *Episcopal Chest* my grateful thanks are due to the Most Rev. the Primus and the Rev. Principal Perry, M.A.

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## PREFACE.

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It will be seen from the Preface to the *Life of Bishop Watson*, which follows that of *Bishop Alexander* in this volume, that I wrote the biography of the later before that of the earlier Prelate. It was in fact printed in the pages of *The Scottish Chronicle*, before the MS. of this was completed.

One result of the earlier composition of the *Life of Bishop Watson* is that I have already described the general purpose of these biographies in its Preface, and, therefore, it is not necessary to repeat here what is said there. Suffice it to repeat that my double object has been :—(1) To pay a debt of gratitude, long due from the piety of the Church, to the departed Worthies herein commemorated ; and (2) To provide the present generation with a record of the affairs of our Church in Non-juring times, combining the gravity of serious history with the attractiveness of personal portraiture.

This method of writing has been rendered possible by the double fact that the period dealt with is comparatively limited, and the supply of hitherto unused epistolary MSS. extraordinarily large.

There is a striking difference, however, in this last connection between the two *Lives*. The peculiarity in that of Bishop Watson is that, despite the interesting *Cruickshank MSS.*, no information concerning the charges included in the Diocese in his time has been forthcoming, whereas the wealth of MSS. to be found illustrating the Episcopate of Bishop Alexander enables us to throw considerable light on the fortunes of the congregations.<sup>1</sup> It is hoped that these local histories will prove interesting to our Church people in the various districts to-day. Glad would the author be, if the perusal of his narrative were to lead to the erection of memorials in the respective Churches in honour of those old-time, and too completely forgotten, worthies, who kept the principles, in which we believe, alive in dark days within the sphere of their labours !

If any one should ask how I have had the courage to relate so minutely the course of those disputes which vexed our Communion during the XVIIIth Century, especially during its earlier half, my first answer is simply that *Magna est Veritas et praevallebit* and my second, that boldness has sprung from the fact, which

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Rose's life is embraced in the other two narratives. See Index.

will be obvious to the patient reader, *i.e.* that in the end every one of these controversies worked itself out to a more or less satisfactory and profitable conclusion.

Thus:—(1) The “College-Diocesan” and “Usager” disputes of the “twenties” issued in the formal and permanent re-union of the Bishops amongst themselves, in terms of the *Concordate* of 1731-2, and contributed something useful towards the organization and worship of the Church; (2) The differences in the Episcopal College which prevailed in the “thirties” may be regarded as no more than an *addendum* to the foregoing, brought about by personal considerations and the difficulty of applying the *Concordate* to actual life, but in any case these differences were completely ended by the deaths of the two old “Collegian” prelates, Bishops Freebairn and Ochterlonie in 1739 and 1742 respectively; (3) The conflict, which broke out between the re-united Episcopate and a party amongst the second order of the Ministry in the “forties,” and which found expression in the “Affairs” of George Sempill and David Fyffe, and more especially in the revolt of the Edinburgh Clergy, finally resulted in the harmonious election of Bishop W. Falconar to the long vacant See in 1776, so bringing Bishops and malcontent Presbyters into restored harmony, and in the admission<sup>1</sup> of the Presbyters to a place in the General Synod—a happy consummation, which would certainly have been reached sooner, had it not been for the awful political explosion of 1745; (4) The warfare between Jacobites and Hanoverians likewise terminated in the resolve of the Bishops, after the death of Prince Charles in 1788, to pray for King George, and in that of the State to bring religious persecution to an end by the Repeal of the Penal Laws in 1792; and (5) the differences between the “Scottish” and “English Qualified” Episcopalians were settled by the adoption of the 39 Articles in 1804, and the auspicious consecration in 1806 of the English Dr. Sandford, as Bishop of Edinburgh, at the hands of the Scottish Prelates.

It was this happy issue of all these controversies which emboldened me to record the heats which prevailed while they were being waged.

In conclusion, I will only add that I have considered the writing of these *Lives* as work for the Church, for surely the refusal to “look to the rock whence we are hewn” and the resulting ignorance of our own past, is a source of weakness (and no imaginary one) to our cause. The provision, therefore, of the means of knowledge ought to be a benefit to our Communion, and, if I have succeeded in compiling a trustworthy and readable narrative from the original MSS., which I have examined, I trust I have not uselessly expended time and energy, which were due to the work of the Church. The rest I must leave to the reader and

*Benedictus Benedicat !*

<sup>1</sup> In 1811.

## CHAPTER I.

1694-1724—*From Birth till Settlement at Alloa.*

John Alexander was born at Auchindore in Aberdeenshire.<sup>1</sup> His father,

“ John Alexander, a graduate of St. Salvador’s College, St. Andrews, was ordained by Bishop Wishart of Edinburgh, 1668, and became Incumbent of Criech, in the shire of Sutherland, formerly the benefice of the Chanter of Caithness, [but] was translated to Kildrummie in Aberdeenshire in 1682.”<sup>2</sup>

Calculating from the date at which he died, and from his age at that time,<sup>3</sup> it must have been in 1694, twelve years after his father came to Kildrummie, that the future Bishop first saw the light. He had three sisters, one who became the wife of Mr. James Cassie; another who married Mr. Allan; and a third named Isabella, who married Mr. Colin Petrie, tenant of Auchentender of Clinkstown in Forgue.<sup>4</sup> No information concerning his childish days has survived.

In our ignorance, therefore, all we can do at this point is to recall briefly the general circumstances of the Church, of which he was destined to become so trustworthy a pillar. The sudden catastrophe of disestablishment and disendowment was an event of the most recent occurrence. The harsh persecution, however, which characterised the reign of William and Mary, and which reduced so many of the “Episcopal” Clergy to beggary, seems to have failed to dislodge his father from his Parish<sup>2</sup> and, if the boy, after his first decade, began to take notice of such things, he would become conscious that the storm was then blowing over, and his elders breathing more freely under the broader magnanimity of the last of the Stuart Princes, Queen Anne. By the time he was eighteen, when we may very confidently assume that he had begun to take an interest in ecclesiastical affairs, he would hail that Monarch’s *Toleration Bill* of 1712 as a sign that the evil days were overpast.

But alas for his hopes! No sooner had that glimpse of sunshine broken through the clouds, than it was obscured in a darkness thicker than ever. The Queen died in 1714, and the greatness of the original shock caused by her demise may be measured by the

<sup>1</sup> M.S. letter in Coates Hall.

<sup>2</sup> See his Epitaph.

<sup>3</sup> C.’s *Caithness*, p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> C.’s *Moray*, p. 123.

fact that the exclamation "Queen Anne is dead!" although, of course, bereft of its first significance, has ever since been repeated, as if it were a proverb, even down to the present day! We may be sure that when John Alexander heard it he was moved with such nervous alarm that he would always record the occasion as one of the great events of his life. And his fears were amply justified. For the Hanoverian party was more fortunate in its dash for the throne than were the representatives of the old native family. The tactics and the arms of the former prevailed, and George I. became king.

Nothing succeeds like success, and the German Prince was now able to treat his conquered rivals as rebels, and amid the latter was the dominant party amongst the Scottish "Episcopalians." Of these were the two Alexanders, father and son. Certainly the elder man, and it is to be presumed the younger also, declared themselves on Prince James's side, and the consequence was that they were at last driven out of their home and:—

"The aged Mr. Alexander was seized and carried a prisoner to Aberdeen. He and Dr. Garden of Aberdeen were both thrust into a noisome dungeon at Coupar-Angus, where the worst of criminals were imprisoned, and after many months of suffering were at last set at liberty on bail."<sup>1</sup>

That is the last we hear about Mr. Alexander, Senior. We know that he was outlived by his wife, and it is not improbable that he succumbed before long to the rough treatment which he received at this time.

Of the future Bishop's present movements, no record has survived, but, measuring by public events, the next period of his life was ushered in by the death of Alexander Rose, Bishop of Edinburgh, which took place in 1720. For that Prelate, alike by his personal character and his ecclesiastical position, had been, as it were, the keystone which held the arch of the disestablished and persecuted Church together. He was the last survivor of the pre-Revolution Bishops, and, notwithstanding the fact that others had been consecrated to continue the Episcopal Succession, he was the only Bishop who held territorial jurisdiction, and on the strength of that and of his position as Vicar of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, the government of the whole Church had been gathered up into his hands. When he died, therefore, and that irregular, but temporarily suitable, arrangement came to an end, without anything having been left to take its place, internal controversies were unavoidably added to external disasters. On the one hand, what was called the "College" party strove with a superficial Conservatism to establish the principle that the Church should be henceforth governed by the Synod of Bishops, acting as a single unit for the whole of Scotland, and that this unit should be nominated and controlled

<sup>1</sup> C.'s *Caithness*, p. 177.

by the [exiled] King ; and, on the other hand, an equally powerful party, with an apparent revolutionariness of aim, but in reality with a deeper Conservatism, strove to bring about the restoration of a full " Diocesan " system, by which each territorial " District " should be superintended by its own elected chief Pastor. Moreover in 1718, owing very greatly to an application made by the English Nonjurors to the Scottish Church, a burning controversy as to the Liturgy, or Service for Holy Communion, sprang up. In our own day, indeed, this has long been amicably settled by the authorisation of both the Scottish and the English Liturgies, but at the stage of Mr. Alexander's life, which we have reached, it was causing acute controversy. Inasmuch, however, as the " Diocesan " party, as a whole, espoused the cause of the " Usages " and of the Scottish Liturgy, and the " College " party were " Anti-usager " and in favour of either the old-fashioned extempore forms or the English Liturgy, this controversy did not produce perplexing cross-divisions in the Church. The *Diocesans* were also *Usagers*, and the *Collegians* *Anti-usagers*.

Although, then, we do not know anything of Mr. Alexander's private movements for ten years after his father's expulsion from Kildrummie, there is no doubt that it was amongst these heated disputes that he prepared for the ministry. The first definite statements about him, belonging to this period, are found in his Letters of Orders. From these we learn that he was ordained Deacon by Bishop Gadderar at Arbuthnot, Sept. 24, 1724, and Priest by Bishop Irvine at Alva on S. Stephen's day in the same year. In his Epitaph<sup>1</sup> he is described as :—

*Anno 1724 Presbyter in Ecclesia Scoticana factus,*

The inscription immediately adds :—*In hoc Oppido consedit,* and, as Alloa was certainly the town in which he died, and where the Epitaph fell to be written, we therefore see that he settled there in the year of his Ordination.

<sup>1</sup> Cruickshank MSS.

## CHAPTER II.

### 1724-1733.—*Under Bishop James Rose.*

As regards the Episcopal jurisdiction under which our Presbyter must have exercised his ministry at Alloa, there can be no doubt that he would be subject to the "College" Bishops, for at this time<sup>1</sup> none of the "Diocesans" claimed Fife as being within any of their Districts. Bishop Fullarton, of Edinburgh, of course, was Vice-Metropolitan, and head of the College, as successor to Bishop Alexander Rose, but it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Alexander would have to deal, almost from the first, with Bishop James Rose, brother of the late well-known Bishop of Edinburgh, inasmuch as that "Bishop-at-large" continued after his Consecration on September 26th, 1726, to reside at Cupar-Fife, in charge of the Congregation there, and Alloa was geographically in the district of Fife.

Several details belonging to the latter half of this period of Mr. Alexander's ministry have come down to us.

First, there are a few relating to his own personal experiences, derived mostly from letters received by him from Mr. James Moir, Bookseller, in Edinburgh. From the addresses prefixed to these we learn that on March 3rd, 1731, he was living, not in Alloa itself, but in the neighbouring village of Alva, where he continued for another year. At the end of that time, however, he seems to have received notice that he must remove from these lodgings, for Mr. Moir wrote:—

"I am sorry you should now be obliged to leave your pleasant habitation, for it will be chargeable [expensive] to furnish a Room."

This "chargeableness" brought his mother upon the scene, and she told her son that she was preparing a supply of blankets and other such commodities for him. During the late spring of 1732, he was oscillating between Alva and Clackmannan, but ere long he secured suitable quarters in Alloa, whereupon Mr. Moir wrote on Oct. 30th:—

"Please acquaint me when you have settled in your new Habitation."

He succeeded in doing so very soon. Indeed, once he had got into this room he began to shew too much disinclination to

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* since the death of Bishop John Falconer in 1723. T.S. p. 207.

leave its shelter, and one of the Alloa ladies evidently gave Mr. Moir a hint to that effect, for the latter writes thus to him :—

“ Mrs. Watson . . . complains much of your immuring yourself up in your Room, and being so shy in taking a well-prepared meal in another Body’s house. I think you ought to prefer taking care of your health to all niceties.”

And, besides this glimpse into Mr. Alexander’s own domestic affairs, Mr. Moir’s letters supply us with some items of Church news from other quarters.

Naturally we take Edinburgh first. During the “ twenties ” the controversies above-mentioned which were disturbing the Church everywhere were waged at their hottest in the Metropolis, but in one of the letters written by Mr. Moir to Mr. Alexander, while the latter was settling in his abode at Alloa, the writer reported that things were now “ very quiet ” in the City. One disagreeable circumstance, however, there was, *i.e.* that Bishop Freebairn, who succeeded Bishop Fullarton in 1733, had determined to censure the Rev. Peter Middleton<sup>1</sup> for celebrating irregular Marriages, and that the delinquent had thereupon, and without further delay, “ begun to pray for G ! ” There was trouble, too, from the Government, for the Secretary of State had ordered the Lord Provost to close all the Meeting-Houses, and although that functionary declined to do so without the King’s sign manual, the command was causing apprehension. Popular feeling also in one distant part of the south had been displaying itself against the Church :—

“ Mr. Gairns was attacked at a Buriall in Annandale, And, I hear, the gown torn off his back and severall of the gentlemen wounded.”

As for the other parts of the country, we have allusions to certain friends of Mr. Alexander, of whom we are destined to hear more. Such were the Rev. Robert Lyon, at present Presbyter at Crail in Fife, who must, however, not be confused with the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth ; the Rev. Wm. Harper, and the Rev. George Chein, hitherto successive Chaplains to Lord Arbuthnot at Gordon Castle, who both “ struck on the rock ” of refusing to attend services conducted by “ Qualified ” and Presbyterian Ministers : the Rev. William Seton of Forfar, who received a legacy of £50 (Oct. 13th, 1731) ; and, lastly, the Rev. Andrew Gerard of Aberdeen, whose Congregation had built a new Meeting-House opposite the College (Dec. 22nd, 1731) and to whose recent Marriage with “ Mrs. Burnet, relict of Rob. Burnet, son to the Minister of Monymusk,” Mr. Moir (Dec. 3rd, 1731) makes the following allusion :—

“ I shall be heartily glad Mr. Gerard’s Match proves successful, for they will both be very happy in a married State, she being a most pious and virtuous Woman.”

<sup>1</sup> For whom see *A Jacobite Stronghold*, p. 25.

Returning from these glances abroad, we come back to the subject of Mr. Alexander's ecclesiastical position, which underwent a slight change at this juncture. Things were "very quiet," we know, in Edinburgh at present. But why was that so? It was because in December, 1731, the Bishops of the two opposing factions, who had never gone so far in their differences as to refuse to receive the Holy Communion at each others' hands, met together in Conference and unanimously agreed to a *Concordate*.<sup>1</sup> By this a working settlement of the Constitutional and Liturgical differences, which had so vexed the Church since Bishop A. Rose's death, was attained. It was often, indeed, put to a severe strain in the times which followed but it was never actually violated, and proved to be an invaluable bond of union amongst the Bishops. Now one of its provisions was this, that the shires of Fife, Clackmannan, and Kinross should be under the Inspection of Bishop James Rose, mentioned above, who thus became Diocesan of Fife (or, as we should phrase it to-day, Bishop of S. Andrews). The consequence for Mr. Alexander was that instead of being ruled by the College of Bishops, using Bishop Rose as their representative, he was now under the full, direct, personal supervision of that Prelate, acting on his own initiative. On July 28th, 1732, he received a preliminary copy of the Concordate, and slightly later the particulars of the Agreement concerning the delimitation of the "Districts" reached his hand.

So little is remembered concerning Bishop James Rose that the following hitherto unpublished items concerning his Episcopate<sup>2</sup> are of interest :—It is evident that, no sooner was there the prospect of his being collated to the See, than Mr. Alexander wrote requesting him to come to Alloa for the purpose of administering Confirmation. On March 14th, 1732, however, the Bishop replied :—

"I received yours and would have answered you sooner had not Mr. Lyon [of Crail], who was with me just when it came to Hand, promised to write you how unpracticable it was for me to make such a Journey at this Season, but Am hopefull once next Summer (if it please God I be in Health and Strength) to see you. Mean Time, if any of those that be desirous to be Confirmed, be such as their Circumstances would allow them to Come this length against the 5th Sunday in Lent (when I am to Confirm some of my own Congregation) upon your Recommendation they may be partakers of that Holy Ordinance. Thus, recommending you to the Blessing of Almighty God, upon yourself and your Labours for the Salvation of Souls, Believe me to be, R[everend] B[rother], your most affectionate Brother and humble Servant, Ja. Ross."

Two months later, namely in May, 1732, the Bishop had a vacant charge in his hands, about supplying which he was somewhat

<sup>1</sup> T. S., p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix.

anxious. This was Saline, a village half-way between Alloa and Dunfermline. In connection with the provision of temporary Services there, he wrote to Mr. Alexander on May 19th :—

“As for ordering my Presbyters to supply them with Sermon for a Time, they are all at too great a Distance, yourself and Mr. Livingstone at Dunfermline excepted.”

For a permanent arrangement he suggested two alternatives :—The one was that the Saline Congregation should guarantee the full stipend of a Pastor, and the other :—

“If that will not do, if your own people and you could agree it betwixt yourselves, it might tend both to the good of those people at Saline and your own advantage that you supplied them yourself every third Sabbath, as you write.”

The last we hear of this case is in a letter from Mr. Moir to Mr. Alexander, dated July 28th, 1732, in which he says :—

“I am glad the People of Saline continue steadfast to their Resolutions and I heartily wish they could make out a fund to support a sufficient Pastor.”

Alas, just because we hear no more, we may conclude that the charge lapsed and became an instance of that process of extinction, which went on so continuously for another hundred years !

It appears by the following two extracts from letters by the Bishop to Mr. Alexander that our Prelate was careful not only of his Confirmations, so far as his health permitted, and of vacant charges, but also that he helped his Clergy with personal counsel. In that letter of July 28th, he said :—

“I shou’d be very glad to see you in this place as soon as you find it convenient for you ; having been very much Indisposed for Some Time bygone. I cannot settle a Time of being your length, though I still resolve upon it, if it shall please God to restore me to Health.”

And on May 8th, he wrote :—

“I received yours and am still resolved to see you this Summer, but when it may be I cannot yet tell. As to the case you write of, being altogether new to me, no certain Rule or Advice can be given you, yourself being best acquainted with the circumstances of the person, you must use your own Discretion in Dealing with him, so as not to loss him for a little Punctilio of Discipline.”

Already at this period, Mr. Alexander was in correspondence with another of the Bishops, *i.e.* the Right Rev. John Gillan.<sup>1</sup> This Prelate, a man of learning, once a bookseller, and afterwards

<sup>1</sup> For whom see further C.’s *Caithness*, p. 217, and Rattray’s and Keith’s *M.S. Correspondence and Jacobite Stronghold*, pp. 25-6.

Pastor of the Carrubbers Close Chapel, had been consecrated at the very height of the "College" controversy *i.e.* in June 22nd, 1727. The "Diocesans" had strengthened themselves in that year by the Consecrations of Rattray, Dunbar, and Keith, and the elevation of Gillan and Ranken to the Bench was carried through at the instance of the Prince's agent, Lockhart, by the "College" Bishops in order that their side might not be outnumbered.<sup>1</sup> In 1731 Bishop Gillan acted as the spokesman of his party in the preliminaries, which led up to the conference, at which the *Concordate* was happily signed. He was considered by Lockhart to be "a person of excellent sense and learning, and withal has zeal [Jacobite?] and firmness." He was also a good preacher<sup>2</sup> and author of a "Life of Bishop Sage." The "District" of Dunblane<sup>3</sup> was assigned to him in the *Concordate*.

On March 15th, 1732, he wrote thus to Mr. Alexander :—

"I received your letter and would most heartily answer your desire, if the state of my health and circumstances did allow, But I have not been abroad since you did me the favour to visit me. . . . I cannot promise that either my health or the weather will allow me to undertake the smallest journey at the time you appoint. Besides, I have been so long from the Congregation wherein I am particularly concerned [*i.e.* in Edinburgh], that they could not take it well, if I should be absent so near the time of the Holy Sacrament [*i.e.* at Easter]. If God spare me to visit my District next Summer, I shall be very ready to wait upon you."

Not, of course, that Alloa was in his "District," but he would pass through the Stirling neighbourhood on his way to Dunblane.

Both these Prelates, it will have been seen, were in failing health. Bishop Rose did not survive long. In a letter dated Oct. 30th, 1732, the Rev. R. Lyon wrote to Mr. Alexander :—

"I am concerned for our honest Bishop, and wish I could think of a Methode how to have him right provided in a Colleague [*i.e.* for his congregational work at Cupar.] I am told some People have left his [Meeting] House."

<sup>1</sup> T.S. 232, 249, 262.

<sup>2</sup> Epochs 105.

<sup>3</sup> Note.—As the internal history of the Diocese of Dunblane is very obscure during the Episcopate of Bishop Gillan, we give the following allusion to it from a letter addressed by the Rev. R. Lyon of Crail to Mr. Alexander on Oct. 30, 1732 :—"Tuesday last I received a Letter of excuse for not attending the designed meeting at Dunblane. I set my spirit of Divination to work and easily foresaw you would not be there and cared not that the whole meeting should consist of none but the good old gentleman and myself, so did not stir from home. Mr. Bell (of Doune) only returned from burying his sister on Saturday. . . . He tells me Mr. Mackenzie at the Weemyss has got an invitation from Mr. Inglis and the gentlemen at Muthill to that Congregation, the Bishop being privy to and commending in the Overture and that he has given them no positive answer."

That seems hard, but Bishop Rose is not the only Cleric from whom his People have turned when he has become "Aged and Infirm."<sup>1</sup> It is not quite clear why Mr. Lyon here speaks as if the Bishop were not "right provided in a Colleague," for in the same breath he says :—

"Mr. White [*i.e.* Rev. Robert White, up till now Presbyter at Eassie, not far from Glamis] comes to Coupar next week bag and baggage and very many say he will repent it."

To Coupar, however, he came, and did not repent it, but the old Bishop only outlived his coming for two and a half years, dying on April 4th, 1733. News of the event was conveyed to Mr. Alexander in a letter<sup>2</sup> from his neighbour, the Rev. A. Livingstone of Dunfermline, dated next day, in which he says :—

"This night about 9 o'clock I had a letter by an express from Coupar giving me the melancholy account of my Uncle, Mr. Ross's death, which happened yesterday morning and the Burial is to be on Sat., 7th inst., at 3 o'clock."

## APPENDIX TO CHAP. II.

### BISHOP JAMES ROSE.

Bishop James Rose's connection with the Rev. J. Alexander is narrated in the text. Since, however, he is little more than a name, even to those fairly well versed in Scottish Church History, the following further particulars concerning him, taken from authentic sources may be found interesting by the reader. *Wodrow*<sup>3</sup> informs us that he was the brother of the well-known Bishop of Edinburgh. Charles Rose, Bishop of Dunblane and Dunkeld, 1774-1791, was his son, and Miss Stewart Rose, the fiancée of the unfortunate Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth, his daughter.<sup>4</sup> *Bishop Abernethy Drummond*<sup>5</sup> informs us that he was originally Parish Minister of "Moniveal," and then Presbyter at Coupar-Fife. On Nov. 29th, 1726, on the nomination<sup>6</sup> of the Prince, he was consecrated as a College Bishop along with Bishop Ochterlonie by Bishops Freebairn, Duncan, and Cant. In 1727, he and the other College Bishops "unanimously approved of the regular and Canonical Settlement of Mr. Ochterlonie [in Dundee] and condemned the proceedings in behalf of Mr. Rait."<sup>7</sup> He was a peaceable and in the main a worthy Prelate.

<sup>1</sup> Moral, the importance of the "Aged and Infirm Clergy Fund."

<sup>2</sup> See my *Lexicon*, 3 pages before 'Dundee.'

<sup>3</sup> See *Lawson* pp. 243, 252. T.S. p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> In *The Rebuffer Rebuffed*, p. 52.

<sup>5</sup> *A True Narrative*, Edin., 1745, p. 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep. Hist. Perth*, 160.

<sup>7</sup> T.S. 233.

"The honest man had a numerous family and a very scanty income."<sup>1</sup> The Diocesan party made two efforts to win him over to their side—(1) He was desired to go to Argyleshire, where Bishop Fullarton resided, to concur with him and Bishop Gadderar in Dr. Rattray's Consecration ; but he having broken or hurt his leg, so that he could not ride on horseback, and having but a small income and therefore unwilling to hire a chaise "pleaded in excuse the expense of the journey"<sup>2</sup>; and (2) "The Clergie of Fife did make proposals through Mr. Morrice<sup>3</sup> to Bishop Ross to become their proper Bishop, and that Lord Dun interposed his good offices also, I believe, is true." They wanted him to bind himself by an agreement of five articles, by which he should undertake to leave the College party and act with the Diocesans. But shortly afterwards he signed a document (June 24th, 1727) along with the College party. As stated in the text, however, he became Diocesan of Fife under the *Concordate* of 1731, upon which he recieved an Address<sup>4</sup> from the Clergy of that District, with which he was very well satisfied. "In this he acted more wisely than his brother-Collegian, Bishop Ochterlonie, who, on being appointed Bishop of Brechin at the same time, was *not* satisfied with the Address from his Clergy but kept "plaguing them" to sign Formulas.

<sup>1</sup> *The Rebuffer Rebuffed*, p. 35, 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Remarks in answer to N. Sievwright*, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. James Morrice was Presbyter at S. Andrews from 1720 to 1739 T.T.O. Sup. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Rattray's Letter of Sep. 20, 1732, in the Lexicon.

P.S.—He also took part in the Consecration of Bishops Gillan and Rankine, June 11, 1727 (*Lawson* p. 253; see also *T.S.*, pp. 233-235).



### CHAPTER III.

#### 1733-1743.—*Under Bishop Keith.*

The first part of this chapter will be occupied with an account of general Church affairs, in which Mr. Alexander was more or less actively interested in the period following Bishop James Rose's death.

I.—The first of these touched him directly, namely the election of a successor to the late Diocesan, which is recorded in the following original documents<sup>1</sup> :—

#### *Instrument of Election of the Right Reverend Bishop Robert Keith for the District of Fife.*

We, Presbyters of the District of Fife, being sensible of the loss we sustain by the want of a Bishop to be a principle of Unity unto us, and having met by virtue of a Mandate, directed by the Right Rev. Mr. David Freebairn, the Primus, and the other Right Reverend Bishops to the Rev. Mr. William Mylne at Falkland, have unanimously Elected the Right Reverend Bishop Robert Keith to be our immediate Ordinary to preside over us and to have the Inspection over the Church of God among us.

And we hereby promise him all due and Canonical Obedience, and we have appointed the Rev. Mr. John Mackenzie, Chaplain to the Earl of Weemiss, humbly to present this our Deed of Election to the above Right Reverend Bishop Keith for his acceptance and to the Right Reverend Mr. David Freebairn, now Bishop of Edinburgh, Primus, and the other Bishops of this Church for their Confirmation. In testimony whereoff we have subscribed these presents, written by Master James Morrice, our Clerk, at Falkland, the tenth day of July, One thousand Seven hundred and Thirty three.

WILL MYLNE, <i>Moderator.</i>	J. MORRICE, Jr., <i>Clerk.</i>
J. MACKENZIE.	JOHN PETRIE.
JOHN ALEXANDER.	ALEX. LIVINGSTON.
ROBERT LYON.	DAVID GORDON.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Gordon's *Scotichronicon* V., p. 246, etc.

*Bishop's Keith's Answer.*

Reverend Brethren, I thank you kindly for the confidence you have placed in me, and shall endeavour, by the help of God, to discharge the duty of my Sacred function among you.

ROBERT KEITH

*The Primus's Answer.*

Right Rev. Brother, We heartily approve the choice the Presbyters of the District of Fife have made of you, and do hereby Confirm you Bishop of that District ; and we pray God may direct and assist you in the Management thereof. Given at Edinburgh the 17 July, 1733.

DAVID FREEBAIRN, *Primus*. JO. GILLAN, *Bishop*.

An account of Bishop Keith will follow in Chapter V.

Another of these general events (or rather in this case series of incidents), originated in the lingering remains of the "College" and "Diocesan" controversy. For, although the *Concordate* had brought that dispute formally to an end and ushered in an era wherein the formally threatened schism in the Episcopate was removed from the sphere of practical politics, yet it took some time for the united Bishops to accustom themselves to the working of the new machinery and to forget personal differences. In particular, Bishop Freebairn, the Primus, who had succeeded Bishop Lumsden in 1733, and Bishop Ochterlonie, of Brechin, the two remaining representatives of the College party, found it very hard to realise that the new office of Primus only carried with it the chairmanship of the Episcopal Synod and did not invest its holder with Metropolitan powers. Consequently there was more than one case in which an attempt was made by Bishop Freebairn to exercise Metropolitan power, and, wherever this was done, he was stoutly resisted by the Bishops, who represented the old Diocesan party. These were the redoubtable Bishop Rattray of Dunkeld ; Bishop Dunbar of Aberdeen, and Bishop Keith, whose election to Fife has just been narrated.

The first occasion, subsequent to the *Concordate*, on which this dispute<sup>1</sup> between Bishop Freebairn and Bishop Rattray took place arose from the death of the other Prelate, of whom we have already spoken as one of Mr. Alexander's friends, *i.e.* John Gillan, Bishop of Dunblane, which occurred in January, 1735. For the Clergy of the vacant Diocese, instead of electing a Diocesan by their own act, referred the choice to the Bishops, and because the Primus claimed that the matter now lay in his hands, Bishop Rattray, with

<sup>1</sup> For an account of which, see MS. correspondence of Bishops Rattray and Keith.

his majority asserted that it was for the Synod of Bishops to decide the point. The Primus refused to give way, and, therefore, the three Bishops, who formed the majority, took the matter into their own control. Their choice fell upon the Rev. Robert White, the assistant and successor of the late Bishop James Rose in the charge of Cupar-Fife, and, when the Primus refused to consecrate the Bishop-designate, the majority proceeded to do so at Carsebank, near Forfar, on June 24th, 1735.

There is nothing to connect Mr. Alexander with that first incident in the dispute, but the second must have touched him more closely. For Bishop Freebairn, it seems, still hankering after the Metropolitan powers, which had been exercised by his predecessors in the See of Edinburgh—Bishops Rose, Fullarton, Millar, and Lumsden—issued a commission to certain of the Clergy of Edinburgh to examine a Mr. Nathanael Spens, who belonged to Bishop Keith's Diocese, for Holy Orders. Against this step the Bishop of Fife issued a protest<sup>1</sup> which began as follows :—

"I, Mr. Robert Keith, Bishop of the District of Fife, understanding that several of the Presbyters of Edinburgh are now employed, by Order of the Bishop of that District, in taking tryal of Mr. Nathanael Spens, belonging to my Jurisdiction, do hereby protest against the uncanonical practice," *etc. etc.*

The upshot of the affair is easily gathered from the following note of MSS. made by Dr. Gordon<sup>1</sup>—

"Originals of Letters concerning the Ordination of Mr. Nathanael Spens by Bishop Freebairn, tho' living and about to officiate in Fife, the District of Bishop Keith, particularly the said Mr. Spens' Holograph Letter of humble submission and acknowledgement to Bishop Keith, April 18th, 1728, upon which he was instantly pardoned and received into favour."

However, although Mr. Spens was thus brought to acknowledge the present constitution of the Church, Bishop Freebairn was still unyielding. It is recorded, indeed, that he was a most amiable and worthy Prelate, and his conservation of customs, which had been constitutional in his younger days, is readily understood. But it was not he, so much as Bishop Ochterlonie, a very erastian-minded man and a fighter,<sup>2</sup> who inspired this belated warfare for the survival of the old outworn scheme of a Metropolitan. Doubtless he thought the Prince would yet make a struggle (a successful one he hoped) for the Throne and be grateful to him for retaining the power of the Crown over the Bishops. Accordingly there was one more unfortunate incident in which the Primus came into collision with the majority. As we have seen, Bishop White, of Dunblane, had been chosen and consecrated by the majority in

<sup>1</sup> *Scoti. V.* 247. *Lawson*, p. 535.

<sup>2</sup> *T.S.*, p. 233.

1735. But he had not yet been formally received by a meeting of the Episcopal Synod. Bishop Rattray and his colleagues had now reason for holding that such reception was highly necessary. In what way, however, could it be effected, when Bishop Freebairn could not, as Primus, be induced to call a Synod in proper form? At last, therefore, after much manoeuvring, the majority saw no means of bringing about the desired meeting, except by summoning it in their own names. This they accordingly did in 1738. The Synod met in Bishop Keith's Chapel in Edinburgh, without the presence of the two opposing Prelates, Bishop Rattray was elected Primus and Bishop White was formally received into the Episcopal Synod, so that the majority therein consisted of four and the minority of two.

Of course, in taking action of this kind, it behoved Bishop Rattray and his friends to walk very warily, and to have the steps taken by them accurately recorded. They, therefore, had the Minutes of their proceedings written out in several copies and distributed amongst the Presbyters in all districts. And Mr. Alexander was one of those who agreed to help in copying out the voluminous Transactions. That appears from the following letter written by him on September 9th, 1738:—

*“ To the Right Rev. Mr. Robert Keith at his Lodgings  
in the Canongate.*

Right Rev. Father, I herewith return your Minutes, having taken a Transcript, which I shall have an occasion to communicate to Mannor and the Brethren in that Quarter very soon, being to meet with Messrs. Niving [Presbyter at Torbrex, near Stirling] and Bell [Presbyter at Doune] on Wednesday next, God willing. I am extremely pleased to observe with what prudent Moderation and Temper things have been carried on in Synod, and hope it shall have the good effect to shame the Dissenters into a better Mind, when in cool Blood they compare your condescending Lenity with their own unreasonable Stiffness. However, it cannot fail to be approved by all thinking and impartial Persons, *maugre* the Clamours industriously raised by interested and designing Men. Mr. Gerard [Presbyter in Aberdeen], from whom I had a letter by Mr. Livingstone [Presbyter at Dunfermline], who is returned this week, is entirely of my Mind and highly applauds your Conduct.”

II.—So far for the general Church affairs, which affected the Presbyter of Alloa during the Episcopate of Bishop Keith.

It remains to take note of certain incidents more strictly personal to himself, which occurred in the same period. In the following letter, dated Dec. 1st, 1733, which is the earliest of those written by Mr. Alexander, which has come down to us, we have

welcome glimpses of our Pastor himself at work amongst his Congregation, and of certain neighbouring charges and their Clergy. The letter, addressed to the Rev. R. Lyon, deals first at considerable length with the relations between Natural and Revealed Religion. After that the writer proceeds as follows :—

“ I have scarce been a Day at Home since the Receipt of your last of Oct. 30th to write an answer till now. Mrs. Bruce of Kinnaird, who took up much of my Time, was buried last Tuesday, so that I hope I shall be more master of myself the rest of this Winter. I have nothing from Edinburgh this long while. Mr. Erskine, who I believe I told you was married to Mr. Thom. Thomson’s daughter, was last Sunday at Muthill to try how that Charge would fit him and determine betwixt it and Bothkennar, which, however, seems to be petted with him, as is his quondam Patron, Mr. Hunter, and therefore gets that Charge now regularly supplied once a fortnight from Edinburgh till young Mackenzie, whom he designs to recommend, have passed his Tryals. I designed a visit lately to Mr. Bell [at Doune], but was stopped at Stirling by bad weather, so that I have not seen him since you was here, nor heard from him.”

On May 11th, 1734, Bothkennar was still vacant, and the Rev. W. Erskine’s “ quondam Patron Mr. Hunter ” obliged to exert himself in finding Clergy to take the duty there. In pursuit of that end, he wrote to Mr. Alexander. After saying that the Bishop [*i.e.* Bishop Freebairn] had commissioned him to communicate the People in early June, he goes on :—

“ I intend to be there two Sundays and to labour among them as heartily as I can to dispose them for that solemn Duty. I am well persuaded you will not grudge to be a Fellow-Labourer with me the first day, nor, I hope will your Congregation take it amiss. You know there must be Discourses Saturday and Monday, especially where there are so many Country People concerned, and you shall choose your Diets yourself.”

Then we have notices of at least two, if not three, calls to other Charges addressed to our Presbyter. The first of these evidently refers to some proposal to move him to the Diocese of Edinburgh, which had not been carried out, for the Rev. Robert Lyon of Crail wrote to him on Jan. 22nd, 1734 :—

“ J[ohn] M[ackenzie] wrote me lately that there are still such Heats and Divisions amongst them [*i.e.* in Edinburgh] as may terrify any Man from entering amongst them, and yet I suspect he will step into *the Stall which should have been yours.*”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1746 Mr. Mackenzie was Pastor of Gray’s Close, Edinburgh—*Jac. Str.* p. 63.

The next also relates to a call from Bishop Freebairn's district, but emanating from a different charge. On Sept. 27th, 1735, the Rev. John Strachan<sup>1</sup> (there was a John Strachan amongst the Managers at Leith<sup>2</sup>) wrote to Mr. Alexander, "Minister of the Gospel at Alloa," requesting an interview "on a matter of importance" and on Nov. 9th, six Clergy urge Alexander "to accept the Call from Leith."

And from a letter signed W. Gibb, dated June 19th, 1741, we learn that about that time our Presbyter was invited to accept the charge of "Stonehyve" [Stonehaven] but that he declined.

We have also evidence that he was interested in a famous book of the day, for Mr. Lyon wrote to him on Aug. 26th, 1742 :—

"I should certainly have sent you . . . these few Strictures upon W[arburton] and then you could have judged better of the whole. I am told there is a new Edition of his whole Div[ine] Leg[ation] advertized with full answers to all, that has appeared against him."

<sup>1</sup> T.C. Cat.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop F's Journal, p. 10.



## CHAPTER IV.

### 1743.—*Becomes Bishop of Dunkeld.*

The Supplement (if we may so call it) to the "College-Diocesan" Controversy, which, as we have seen, disappointingly prolonged itself throughout the "Thirties" of the century, was itself fully closed in the early "Forties." This was brought about by the death of Primus Freebairn on Christmas Eve, 1738, followed by that of Bishop Ochterlonie at the end of May, 1742. With the disappearance of these two Prelates there ceased to be any representatives of the old College Party in the Episcopal Synod, and the Diocesans under their able leader, Bishop Rattray, were left masters of the field, so far as the Bishops were concerned.

At this juncture a proposal was made which has been left unnoticed by the historians. Since, however, it has been both recorded by Mr. Alexander and had also direct bearing upon himself, some account of it follows here. The suggestion was that, with a view to his becoming successor of Bishop Freebairn in Edinburgh, Bishop Keith, who was Pastor of a Congregation (presumably in Barrenger's Close<sup>1</sup>) in that City, should resign the See of Fife; that Bishop White should be translated thither from Dunblane, and that Mr. Alexander should succeed to the resulting vacancy in Dunblane.

That all appears from the two following letters written by Mr. Alexander.

The first is addressed to Bishop White, and, although undated, evidently belongs to October 1742. It is to the following effect:—

" R. R. S., I received your letter of the 12th inst., and was at Dunfermline last week to communicate it to Mr. Livingston, as you desired, which hindered my answering you sooner. I am sorry to find that by your account we [*i.e.* the Diocese of Fife] are now destitute of a Head in this District [*i.e.* Bishop Keith must have privately announced his resolve to resign Fife], and pray God we may be supplied with a good one. It gives me also much concern to think that you should have any occasion of displeasure or complaint [an allusion clearly to disputes in Dunblane]. If I knew what might give you ease, I'm sure I would do everything that reasonably might be desired, or what, without exposing myself to the greatest incon-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Minute of Episcopal Synod of 1738.

veniences, I could to compass it ; but, as the Vacancy has not yet been notified by Mr. Keith or the Primus [Rattray] to me, or so far as I know, to any of my fellow Presbyters, I can say nothing positive in the matter, but that, as the Authority of the Bishops has always been of great weight with me, I will still continue to pay a due Regard to it. To be ingenuous and plain, if it be agreeable to them, as I wish from my heart it may, I shall be the very first who shall cheerfully give my Suffrage for you to succeed to this District ; but if, as you seem to insinuate, it be designed that I should succeed you in Dunblane, you must have me excused, for nothing will prevail upon me to accept of that ; it is too ticklish a charge for me who am a novice. I need give no other reasons, for I do not expect to be pushed."

The second letter is dated Nov. 1st, 1742, and is evidently addressed to Bishop Keith :—

" R. R. F., I had got your answer last week, and shall conform myself to your directions [*i.e.* as being in Bishop Keith's diocese] as far as I can ; only in one thing I must beg to be excused, and it gives me extreme pain that in any one thing I should be obliged to differ in sentiment from persons for whom I have so high a veneration and esteem, as I have for Bishop R[atray] and you. The District of Dunblane is too ticklish a charge for me, and what, in the first Situation, I will not be induced to undertake. Wherein I could serve Bishop White without involving myself in very great difficulties, I would spare no charge or pains to do it. He must pardon me, as I have wrote to him, and I thought it fair to tell you so much in time, upon the first notice of the design, that you might take your measures accordingly. I should think, but with all due Submission, that Fife needed be no great additional Trouble to him, since Dunfermline and this [*i.e.* Alloa], the only two distant parts [*i.e.* from Cupar] lie directly in his way, when he goes to visit his present charge."

So matters stood in the meantime, and doubtless this proposed resignation of Fife by Bishop Keith, followed by the translation of Bishop White to that Diocese, and the filling of Dunblane, left vacant by Bishop White, was one of the questions designed to be settled by the Episcopal Synod now summoned by the Primus to meet in Edinburgh in May, 1743.

Here, however, was a case in which " man proposes but God disposes." For, before the time for the meeting, this first Synod, in which the Bishops would not be divided into representatives of the old " Diocesan " and " College " parties, but be all of the one school, arrived, Bishop Rattray, their strong and respected

leader, was taken from them. He had proceeded to Edinburgh in April to prepare for the assembly, from which he hoped so much, but he suddenly took ill on May 9th, and died on the 12th, being Ascension Day.

There can be no doubt that his death was an irreparable loss. His deep learning, his high social position as Laird of Craighall, and his strong, trustworthy character, combined to mark him as a pillar of the Church. His virtues were feelingly proclaimed in an anonymous<sup>1</sup> poem, of which the following lines are the beginning and the end :—

“ O for a Muse like his, that mourned in Strains  
 Sublime, and o'er Gilboa's Mountains wept  
 For Jonathan and Saul ! O ! for a Muse  
 Inspired with more than mortal Song ! to paint  
 What weeping gratitude and Duty bids,  
 A loss that's great to me, that's great to all !  
 O ! I have lost my Friend, my Father, and my Guide !  
 . . . Rattray is gone to Heav'n ! . . .  
 But thou hast left behind a nobler Fame,  
 Than monumental Brass or Parian Stone,  
 Or Poet's Lay, can give, the High Esteem.  
 The reverential Love of all the good,  
 To whom thy Memory shall e'er be blessed ! ”

The Rev. John Skinner of Linshart, also penned the following lament :—

“ Dum numerat doctum renitens ecclesia prolem  
 Totque videt sanctos undique laeta patres ;  
 Dum depressa jacet, nec concutit haeresis arma  
 Opprimet heu ! subitus gaudia tanta dolor !  
 Cessit Rattraius fato, Rattraius et ille,  
 Quem timuere hostes, quem coluere boni ! ”

We have another contemporary allusion to the sad event in a letter<sup>2</sup> dated from Craighall on June 15th, 1743, to Bishop Keith by Mr. James Falconer, concerning whom seven years later (Nov. 3, 1750) the Rev. Robert Lyon, then of Stretton in Bedfordshire,<sup>3</sup> wrote to Bishop Alexander :—“ I reckon James F[alconer] to be one of them ” [*i.e.* of the Rattrays]. In that letter, Mr. Falconer says to Bishop Keith :—

“ Sir, I give you my most hearty thanks for doing me the honour in sending me what you said so excellently upon the funeral of our never to be too much lamented Father (for so I may call him in a double sense). You have given his Character so exactly that it is rather a Transcript of his Life.”

<sup>1</sup> By Dr. Drummond of Logie Almond. *Lawson* p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. Ch.

<sup>3</sup> Left Crail 1741—*Scotich.* V. 247.

This unexpected and tragic event, however, was not followed by the abandonment, but only by the modification, of the proposal for the arrangement of the Dioceses.

To begin with, Bishop Keith, having succeeded Bishop Rattray as Primus, actually resigned the District of Fife,<sup>1</sup> and it was evidently hoped that he would be elected to the See of Edinburgh, which (it appears) had been offered to Bishop Rattray after Bishop Freebairn's death.

In view of this prospect William Falconar, Bishop of Moray, wrote a letter to Mr. Alexander, from which the following is an extract :—

“ Chuse whom they will, they cannot make a better choice [*i.e.* than Bishop Keith]. And, therefore, should it happen to come to be talked of in any Conversation where you may be a sharer, what my Sentiments are with respect to the Diocese of Edinburgh (as you and I know one another's thoughts upon that head, as well as on some others) I beg you'll do me the favour (I leave the opportunity to your own prudence) to answer in my name that I still look upon Bishop Keith, upon many accounts, to be the fittest and properest person for being Bishop of Edinburgh, and, wherever I have anything to say, he shall have my Suffrage for it.”

The Rev. R. Lyon of Stretton, also wrote in the same strain to Mr. Alexander on Aug. 26th :—

“ If they please to fix my quondam Ordinary in Edinburgh [*i.e.* as Bishop : he was already Pastor of a Congregation there], with all my heart ; for, however one other Bishop might be fitter for that in some Respects than K[*Keith*], yet most certain it is that K. is fitter for that than for any other District, because it does not require so much travelling.”

However, the Edinburgh Presbyters, as we shall soon see clearly, were not at all in sympathy with the present complexion of the College of Bishops, and the plan fell through, Bishop Keith remaining Diocesan of Caithness and Orkney, and continuing to live in charge of his Congregation<sup>2</sup> in Barrenger's Close.

We shall presently learn how it fared with the proposed translation of Bishop White from Dunblane to Fife, but first it is necessary to narrate the steps taken to fill the See of Dunkeld, rendered vacant by the death of the late lamented Primus.

From the first, the eyes of those responsible were turned towards Mr. Alexander. This appears from the rest of Mr. James Falconer's letter<sup>3</sup> to Bishop Keith, of June 15th, 1743. He there says :—

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* 247.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* V. 192.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Ch.*

“Yours of May 30th came not to my Hand till last week. Immediately upon perusing it, I communicated the Contents relating to Mr. Alexander to Mr. and Mrs. Rattray [*i.e.* the Bishop's Son, and successor as Laird of Craighall, and his Wife], to both of whom it gave great satisfaction, Mr. Alexander being the Person our good Bishop recommended to all our hearings, as the Man most fit for that high Order in the Church. We proposed it to three Presbyters in this Neighbourhood, in whom we could most confide, who were united in the Choice of Mr. Alexander; besides, they seemed confident of having very few contradictory voices. However, the most part of the Presbyters of this District were to have a meeting sometime this Week at Forfar, in order (I suppose) to know one another's Minds about a successor to our late memorable Bishop. I shall not fail to acquaint you of what I can gather from our Friends of this neighbourhood, some of whom I am hopeful will be returned from Forfar against the end of this Week.”

The result is related in the following extracts from the *Dunkeld Register*:—On June 28th, 1743, the Clergy of the vacant Diocese, in obedience to a summons from the Dean, the Very Rev. Mr. William Seton in Forfar, met at Meikle, and, after giving expression to their sense of severe loss in the death of Bishop Rattray, applied to the Bishops for a Mandate to elect a Successor. Their request having been granted, they again assembled at Meikle on Aug. 9th, 1743:—

“Then all the Presbyters present, for themselves, and Mr. Lyon as Proxy for Mr. Drummond,<sup>1</sup> gave in their votes for a Clergyman to be their Bishop and it carried (*nemine contradicente*) in Favours of the Reverend Mr. John Alexander, Presbyter at Alloa, in order to whose Promotion they all unanimously agreed immediately to address the Bishops of this National Church, that he might be by them (with all convenient speed) consecrated and appointed to take Inspection of this vacant District and for that end drew up and signed their Deed of Election in form following, directed as ordered in the first Mandate, before written:—

“To the Right Rev. Mr. Robert Keith, Bishop of Caithness. The Deed of Election of the Presbyters of the District of Dunkeld.”

“We, the Presbyters of the District of Dunkeld, being, in obedience to the Mandate of the Right Reverend the Bishops of this National Church, at the desire of the Very Rev. Mr. William Seton, Presbyter at Forfar, our Dean,

<sup>1</sup> For whom see *Ep. Hist. Perth*.

assembled at Meikle this Ninth day of August in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Three, in order to elect a Successor to the truly pious learned Dr. Thomas Rattray, our late Ordinary, whom it has seemed good to our Heavenly Father to call hence to a state of Bliss: Being well approved of the great Piety, Learning, Prudence, and other Abilities of the Rev. Mr. John Alexander, Presbyter at Alloa, and being certified that he was, by our late worthy Ordinary, whose Judgment will ever be of great weight, as his Memory shall still be precious amongst us, designed for and thought deserving of the Episcopal Character—Do hereby nominate and elect the said Mr. John Alexander to be our Bishop and by this our Deed unanimously recommend him to the Right Rev. Mr. Robert Keith, Bishop of Caithness, to be with all convenient speed consecrated by him and such of his Right Rev. Colleagues, the Bishops of this National Church, as he shall be pleased to call to his Assistance in that great and good work, which we humbly pray may be to the glory of God and the good of this afflicted Church. And we promise (through Divine assistance) all due Submission and canonical obedience to this our Elect, upon his Consecration.”

They then proceeded to draw up and subscribe an Address to the Elect Bishop, in very similar terms. Follows a Copy of Mr. Alexander's Letter of Acceptance, directed thus:—

*“ To the Very Rev. Mr. William Seton, Dean, and  
the Rest of the Reverend Clergy in the District  
of Dunkeld, etc.”*

“ Revd. and my very dear Brethren, The Address, intimating your Election of a Successor to the District of Dunkeld, was safely delivered to me by the Hands of the Right Rev. Bishop Keith, and my Returns of Acknowledgement should have been with you before this Time, had I not been detained at Edinburgh beyond my expectation: and, during my stay there, I had no Leisure nor Conveniency, so that I hope you'll excuse the short Delay.

You may be well assured I have the justest sense of the Honour you have put upon me in your Choice, and, tho' I am no less sensible of the heavy weight of that Charge, to which you have called me, and of my own great Insufficiency to fill it, yet, after mature Consideration and in due deference to the Order of my lawful Superiors, who insist upon it, and in gratitude to you, my Brethren, for this signal Testimony of your Respect, trusting to the Divine Goodness for strength and assistance, I have been deter-

mined at last to satisfy your Desire and was accordingly consecrated<sup>1</sup> to the Order of a Bishop upon the nineteenth of this Month in Bishop Keith's Chapel in Edinburgh by him and his other Brethren called upon for that purpose, which God grant may turn to His glory and the good of this desolate Church.

What engaged me to accept your offer with the greater cheerfulness was the Persuasion I lay under of your Capacity for Council, from which I had much to hope; and of your orderly Conversation and Good Temper, from which I had nothing to fear. With these advantages, under the Aid and Direction of Almighty God, for which I most earnestly entreat your fervent Prayers, I shall not despair of being of some use in my Station. And, tho' from the comparison it may seem a great Discouragement to succeed the matchless Person, who last presided among you, I shall look upon the thing in another Light, and always reckon it my glory, at however humble a Distance, to follow the steps of the great and good Bishop Rattray, our Loss in whom cannot be enough deplored, nor can we do too much to honour his Memory.

Wherefore let me in the strongest manner recommend to you to make the Dictates and Directions he has often given you, the Rule of your Proceeding in your sacred Function and to copy out the shining Pattern of his Life. May God enable me to fortify it by my own.

I know not when or where it may be proper for me, as I would wish, to salute you in a Body; for this I refer myself entirely to your Advice, only suggesting that it will not be convenient for me, till the first week in October is past. In the meantime, and as I know it will be highly agreeable to you all, it is my Desire that your worthy Dean, Mr. Seton, shall continue to execute that Charge, which he has hitherto done with so much applause, and to proceed in it according to the plan laid down by Bishop Rattray. May the Divine Blessing be always present with you to sanctify your Persons and prosper your Ministry, is the hearty Prayer of Rev. and very dear Brethren, your affectionate Brother and Servant,

JOHN ALEXANDER."

Writing from "Col. Churchill's on Rappahannoch, Virginia," on Aug. 4th, 1744, William Henderson, besides giving Bishop Alexander some interesting particulars concerning cessions of territory by the Indians and suchlike matters, says:—

<sup>1</sup> The Deed of his Consecration is No. 63 in Dr. Craven's Catalogue of the Episcopal Chest.

"I heartily congratulate you upon being advanced to the highest and most honourable office in Life, being persuaded of your uncommon Abilitys and Diligence in discharging the same faithfully and as it becomes one invested with such a weighty and solemn Charge."

He also makes a general reference to some opposition to his friend's elevation, of which we do not elsewhere hear.



## CHAPTER V.

### 1743.—*The Bench of Bishops.*

Having now seen Mr. Alexander consecrated to the Episcopate and collated to the Diocese of Dunkeld, it will be interesting to glance round the bench of Bishops and so to understand with what colleagues he was called upon to work. Fortunately for us something remains recorded of each of them<sup>1</sup> :—

(1) *The Right Rev. William Dunbar* was Bishop of *Aberdeen*. He was a man of some mark in his day, "being one of the ablest and most devoted of the Episcopal Ministers."<sup>2</sup>

Cruden, in Aberdeenshire, was amongst those localities which remained entirely loyal to Episcopacy after the Revolution, and it was only two years after that catastrophe that Mr. Dunbar was ordained Minister of the Parish, "likely by the hands of a Bishop." For several years after his settlement, and while Presbyterianism was still weak, the relations between him and his Presbytery appear to have been of the most cordial description. He used the *Book of Common Prayer* in his ministrations.<sup>3</sup> In 1708, that is twenty years after the Revolution, the Presbyterians made their first effort to dislodge him; but it failed completely. He threw himself, however, with heart and soul into the Rising of 1715, and as the Prince, whose cause he espoused, was defeated; the step which he had taken placed him at last in the hands of his foes. The Presbytery and the Synod, indeed, were unsuccessful in their attempts to eject him,<sup>4</sup> such a hold had Episcopacy and his own personal worth upon the district, but on Saturday, 29th, 1716, the "military were sent from Peterhead by orders of the Sheriff to take possession of the Church, and to debar him from preaching." On the Sunday appointed, the Presbyterian Minister, who came to Cruden, preached to an audience of military. Not a parishioner was present! Even so, however, it was not till March 1st, 1718, that our Presbyter was actually driven from his

<sup>1</sup> I have drawn my information chiefly from the following sources :—

For *Bishop Dunbar*—T. Stepen's *History of the Church of Scotland*, 1848, Vol. IV., and Mackay's *Cruden's Two Bishops*, Peterhead, 1911.

For *Bishop White*—The *MS. Register of Dunblane*, 1735-43 and *Scotich. V.*, pp. 289-92.

For *Bishop Rait*—"*An Instructed Historical Account of the Settlement in the Episcopal Congregation of Dundee*," printed in the year MDCCXLIV. "*A True Narrative of the Case between the Episcopal Congregation in Dundee*," etc. Edin.: Sands, Murray, & Cochran, 1745.

For *Bishop Falconar*—Craven's "*History of the Episcopal Church in Moray*," Chapters XIV. and XV. Kirkwall, Wm. Peace, 1889.

For *Bishop Keith*—Gordon's *Scotichronicon* V., pp. 187-289, and C.'s *Moray V.*, pp. 79-83.

<sup>2</sup> See *Cruden's Two Bishops* by Rev. A. Mackay.

<sup>3</sup> Craven's *Moray*, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> T.S. pp. 131-2, 140.

Parish, and, when he was finally deprived of his living, the entire congregation of the Parish Church went out with him and it was more than a year before a Presbyterian Minister could be found bold enough to settle in his place.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Dunbar had in him the elements of heroism. He was one of that little band of "Episcopalian" Ministers, who on Oct. 30th, 1716, when all was vague uncertainty and dread, met together at the Lews of Fyvie to consider the fortunes of the Church and to take concerted measures for defence. It was at the Manse of Cruden, under his supervision and largely by his pen, that the remarkable book, *A Representation of the State of the Church in North Britain and of the Sufferings of the Orthodox and Regular Clergy*, was compiled and written.

In 1727, when the "College" party were consecrating Bishops on the King's (exiled) nomination and the "Diocesans" were trying to deliver the Church from servile subjection to the (exiled) Civil Power,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Dunbar was elected by the disestablished Clergy of Moray and Ross, who had been without an Ordinary since the death of Bishop Hay<sup>3</sup> in 1707,<sup>4</sup> and consecrated<sup>5</sup> on June 18th by Bishops Millar, Gadderar, and Rattray<sup>6</sup>. The year after his Consecration, *i.e.* on Whitsunday, 1728, he ordained Mr. William Falconar, of whom we shall hear more, Deacon, "in the Oratory of the Countess of Erroll at Slains."<sup>7</sup> There is ample evidence preserved that he more than once visited his District and administered Confirmation. On June 5th, 1733, however:—

"By a Mandate from the Bishops, the Clergy of the diocese of Aberdeen met at Old Meldrum, a town of that diocese, about eighteen miles north-westward of that City, for the purpose of electing a successor to the late Bishop Gadderar [died 1733] and their choice fell upon Mr. William Dunbar, Bishop of Moray, who soon afterwards resigned the Bishopric of Moray."<sup>8</sup>

And thus, when Bishop Alexander was consecrated, Bishop Dunbar was a representative on the bench of the former generation of Bishops, being at this date 72 years of age.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare these events which were similar to those enacted in a very great number of other Parishes, with the vaunted assertion made in the *Claim of Right* that "Prelacy" was "a great and unsupportable grievance and trouble and contrary to the inclination of the generality of the people ever since the Reformation." Obviously that declaration has to be taken *cum grano salis*!

<sup>2</sup> Skinner's *Eccl. Hist. Scot.*, Vol. II. pp. 641, etc.

<sup>3</sup> There is an old inscribed Tablet to Bishop Hay's memory in Inverness Cathedral. Bishop Gadderar of Aberdeen (1722-1733) performed Episcopal Offices within the Diocese. *Lawson* p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> Craven's *Bishop Forbes*, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> In W's *Buchan*, p. 69, it is said that he was also Coadjutor of Edinburgh.

<sup>6</sup> T.S. p. 250.

<sup>7</sup> Craven's *Moray*, pp. 109-110.

<sup>8</sup> T.S. 268.

<sup>9</sup> Cruden p. 7.

(2) *The Right Rev. Robert Keith* was Bishop of *Orkney and Caithness*.

"I was born (says the Bishop<sup>1</sup>) at Uras in the Mearns on Monday, Feb. 7th, 1681, and named Robert after the Viscount of Arbuthnot . . . My Father, Alexander Keith, Died Thursday, Jan. 25th, 1683, and I have been told that, in the course of his fever, he took me in his arms and dandled me and said :—' If I die at this time, O ! that my keen cockie would go with me ! ' Besides my eldest Brother, Alexander, I had three Sisters."

Fortunately his Mother was a woman of character :—

She " was the daughter of Robert Arbuthnot of Little Fiddes in Kincardineshire, and her prudence and affection appear to have left a deep impression on the mind of her son. . . . He was indebted to her for the knowledge of letters and for the still more important lessons of early virtue and religion. . . . She died at Aberdeen on Sat., Dec. 6th, 1707, about the 69th year of her age."<sup>2</sup>

By this time the future Bishop, who through her exertions had received a good education at school, and at Marischal College, Aberdeen, had also made his first start in life :—

" She had the comfort of seeing me Preceptor or Tutor to my young Chief, the Lord Keith, from the month of July, 1703, with whom and his Brother, I continued seven full years till July 1710."<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, while in Aberdeen :—

" I had (he says<sup>3</sup>) the happiness to be much acquainted with the worthy and learned Dr. George Garden, Deprived Minister of that City, from whom I had the opportunity to receive many internal good books, for which I bless God to this day."

Such having been his upbringing,

" About a month after he retired from the situation of Preceptor to his noble relatives, he was admitted to the Order of Deacons<sup>4</sup> on Aug. 16th, 1710, by the Right Rev. George Halyburton, the deprived Lord Bishop of Aberdeen, and, in the November following, he informs us, he became Domestic Chaplain to Charles, Twelfth Earl of Errol."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* V., 187-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* V., p. 187.

<sup>3</sup> *Scotich.* V., p. 188-284, and Craven's *Ep. Ch. in Moray*, pp. 78-83.

<sup>4</sup> "*Secundum ritus et morem antiquae ecclesiae.*" So also at his Priesthood. *Scotich.* V. 192.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190.

"In June, 1712, he accompanied his Lordship to the baths of Aix-la-Chapelle," (meeting there the celebrated mystical writer, Peter Poinet) and visited a great number of well-known cities. At last at Dunkirk, "I took ship; but we were soon obliged to put into Calais. Next day we set sail again for England, but met with a most prodigious storm of wind, insomuch that some ships were lost just in the passage near to us. However, it pleased God that I landed safe at Dover, S. Michael's day (Sep. 29th) 1712, where I remained a long time very tender through the wet and cold, through the storm. I set out for Edinburgh in the stage coach, Feb. 2nd, 1713."

Dr. Gordon goes on to say<sup>1</sup>:—

"On his return from the Continent, after his engagement with Lord Erroll, he was invited by one of the numerous small congregations then in Edinburgh [probably in Barrenger's Close] to become their Pastor, and accordingly he was raised to the Priesthood by Bishop Halyburton on May 26th, 1713. It is worthy of remark that he continued in the same charge till the day of his death."

Concerning this period, Bishop Keith says of himself<sup>2</sup>:—

"I was one of his [*i.e.* Bishop A. Rose's] Presbyters from Pentecost, 1713. He was a sweet-natured man and of venerable aspect."

After that Bishop's death, Mr. Keith took a prominent part in the "College-Diocesan" controversy on the Diocesan side. He was one of those, for instance, who protested against the Consecration of Bishop Gillan on Jan. 22nd, 1727. For that he had to undergo a severe scolding from the Prince's agent, Lockhart,<sup>3</sup> and in the same year he used his influence with Bishop Fullarton in favour of the Usager, Mr. James Raitt, being settled in Dundee.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly we are not surprised to find that, since, as has been set forth in our notice of Bishop Dunbar, the "Diocesans" found themselves obliged to advance certain of their Presbyters to the Episcopate in order that they might not be numerically swamped by the "College," Mr. Keith was one of those selected for promotion. Immediately after the elevation of Bishop Rattray he was consecrated (along with Bishop Dunbar) on June 18th, 1727, as Bishop of Orkney and Caithness and Coadjutor to the Primus, Bishop Millar.<sup>5</sup> Of course the College party challenged his position at first, but the Concordate of 1731, by which the two rival parties came to an agreement, confirmed him in his northern

<sup>1</sup> *Scotch.* p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Lawson's *Memoir*, p. xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Lawson's *Memoir*, p. xxviii.

<sup>4</sup> *Scotch.* p. 238.

<sup>5</sup> T.S. p. 250. *Scotch.* p. 245. Lawson, p. 531.

jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> In 1733, as has been related in Chap. III., he added the Diocese of Fife<sup>2</sup> to his charge. In 1735 and 1738 he worked zealously along with Bishop Rattray in the matter of the Consecration and Reception of Bishop White of Dunblane, and substantially contributed to the defeat of Primus Freebairn and Bishop Ochterlonie in that affair. In 1734 there was certainly a scheme, favoured by the party of those two defeated prelates, based upon the specious pretext of his being in such a state of health that he could never visit Orkney and Caithness, of superseding our Bishop there by the Consecration of the Rev. William Harper of Leith,<sup>3</sup> but it came to nothing. In 1741, Bishop W. Falconar, being resident in Elgin, became his Coadjutor for Caithness and Orkney, but, next year, on the election of that Prelate to Moray, this excellent arrangement came to an end, and Bishop Keith resumed his charge as before.<sup>4</sup> On Oct. 14, 1742, he took part in the Consecration of Bishop Raitt, who was of Usager sympathies, as successor of the old champion of the "Anti-Usagers," Bishop Ochterlonie.

Such was an outline of this Prelate's career up to the date which has been reached in this History. It remains to add that, besides being of aristocratic descent, he was a man of intellect and learning. Before his Ordination he seems to have been a good Latin scholar.

"As the Doctor," (he says,<sup>5</sup> meaning Dr. George Garden, deprived Minister of Aberdeen) was employed about that time in a new Edition of the excellent Works of the very learned Dr. John Forbes of Corse, he was pleased to desire me to Translate into Latin the last seven years of 'Dr. Forbes's Diary,' or *Vita Interior*."

He also conducted a long and controversial correspondence with Bishop Smith, the English Non-juring Prelate, and in 1734<sup>6</sup> he compiled his great work entitled *Affairs of Church and State in Scotland*, which many eminent historians have since used as a mine of information. "Such a book," said Bishop Smith, July 15th, 1736, "will stand the test of ages and will always be valued, because no part is related but upon the best authority." He also printed a translation of four books of *Thomas a Kempis* in 1717<sup>7</sup> and of the *Soliloquy of the Soul* and *Valley of Lilies*.

It was his custom, where practicable, to make use of Chrism in administering Confirmation<sup>8</sup> and amongst his candidates in

<sup>1</sup> T.S. 263. C.'s *Church in Orkney* IV., 77.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop J. Falconer was Bishop of Fife 1720-3.

<sup>3</sup> C.'s *Caithness*, pp. 215-218.

<sup>4</sup> C.'s *Church in Orkney*, pp. 82-3, where it is shown that he was Bishop of C. & O. at his death.

<sup>5</sup> *Scotich.* 189.

<sup>6</sup> *Scotich.* 195. Lawson xxxv.

<sup>7</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 49, 57. *Scotich.* 264.

<sup>8</sup> C.'s *Bp. F.* 12.

1740 was John Skinner, afterwards the well-known Dean of Aberdeen. "In<sup>1</sup> singing the *Te Deum*, which he commonly does every Sunday and holy day, he leaveth off with the 18th versicle."

That he was a married man appears from the conclusion of the Rev. James Taylor of Thurso's letter of Jan. 14, 1734, wherein the writer says :—<sup>2</sup>

"I wish your Reverence, your good Lady and children this and many succeeding years."

His "good lady" was Isabel, daughter of the Rev. John Cameron,<sup>3</sup> and, if they had more than one child, it would appear that only one can have grown up to maturity, as in his later years it is always said that he had only one child. When he died he left only £450.

Skinner, whom he confirmed, says summarily of him and of Bishops Rattray and Dunbar :—

"I knew them. Their personal characters were irreproachable, and then their labours for the real Interests of Religion and Truth will be remembered with applause when you [*i.e.* Rev. N. Sievwright of Brechin] and I will both be forgotten."<sup>4</sup>

(3) *The Right Rev. Robert White* was Bishop of Dunblane. This Prelate was the son of Mr. Charles White, Merchant in Dundee, who was a supporter of Mr. Raitt at the time of the latter's settlement in that city. He must have been well-to-do, because Robert "had Oxford education."<sup>5</sup>

The following is an account<sup>6</sup> of the young man's Ordination :—

"Nay, even the Bishop of Dunblane [*i.e.* Douglas<sup>7</sup>], when he lived at Dundee, would not ordain any person out of his own Diocese, but as desired to do it by the Bishop of Edinburgh. We have an instance of this in the case of Mr. Robert White, who, upon a vacancy at Essie [near Glamis] was chosen by those concerned there to that Charge. But this good Bishop did not meddle with his Ordination, though he lived in the same town with him, till he had the Bishop of Edinburgh's letter recommending it to him. Bishop [John] Falconer happening to come at that time to Dundee, he shewed him the letter and entreated him to take part in it by ordaining him Deacon, after which he himself [*i.e.* Dunblane] should put him into Priest's Orders; but he [Falconer] refused this, saying he had

<sup>1</sup> A True Narrative, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> C.'s *Caithness*, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> *Scotich.* 282.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to N.S., p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> 3 leaves before Dundee in the Lexicon.

<sup>6</sup> By Bishop Rattray. See S.S.B. 1914, 32.

<sup>7</sup> Who died Sept. 22, 1716. T.S. p. 133.

no title to act in it and that the order not being directed to him, he could not regularly do it. And, though he yielded at length to his importunity, yet it was only on his promising to write to the Bishop of Edinburgh and to take all the blame of that irregularity upon himself."

On Feb. 19th, 1730, Mr. White was present in the Chapel at Craighall assisting Bishop Rattray (who in those days previous to the *Concordate* assumed the title of Bishop of Brechin) in the Ordination of the Rev. John Addison to the Priesthood.<sup>1</sup>

In a MS.<sup>2</sup> dated "S. Mark's day, 1733," it is said:—

"Bishop Gillan has recommended Wingate in this place [*i.e.* Edinburgh where he lived at Forglen's Close<sup>3</sup>] to the Meeting House at Coupar [Fife, where Bishop James Rose had just died]; but, as Mr. Lyon at Craill is come over here from that place, I believe he will prevail on the Bishop to alter his resolutions in favour of one, Mr. White (I think)."

The writer, living in Edinburgh, may not indeed have heard that Mr. White had already come, "bag and baggage"<sup>4</sup> to Cupar in the previous Autumn as Bishop Rose's Assistant, but Mr. Lyon, residing in the nearer neighbourhood, would be aware of his claim to the appointment. At all events it is certain that our Presbyter continued in charge of the Cupar Congregation.

His daughter, Cecilia, was the wife of the Rev. James Morrice of S. Andrews. This couple had a family of five children, born between 1728 and 1737. Mr. White baptized three of them.<sup>5</sup>

It was about this time that his elevation to the Episcopate took place. Some mention of this has already been made in our sketch of Bishop Keith above. We there saw that on the death of Gillan, Bishop of Dunblane,<sup>6</sup> Jan. 3rd, 1735, the misunderstanding between the formerly "College" and "Diocesan" parties amongst the Bishops, flamed up from its embers with regard to the Consecration of a successor. Primus Freebairn, supported by Bishop Ochterlonie, still supposing that as Bishop of Edinburgh, he was possessed of Metropolitan powers, claimed to have the management of the affair, and on the other hand Bishops Rattray, Dunbar, and Keith, maintaining that the Primus was only Chairman of the Bishops, asserted that it was for the majority of the Bishops to settle the matter. And settle it the majority did. For, the Presbyters of the vacant Diocese having referred the choice as well as the Consecration of Bishop Gillan's successor to the Bishops, the majority selected Mr. White, and then, since the Primus refused to lay hands upon him, consecrated

<sup>1</sup> Finavon MS.

<sup>2</sup> 3 pp. before Dundee.

<sup>3</sup> *Jacobite Stronghold*, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> T.T.O., p. 16 Ap.

<sup>6</sup> Who had succeeded Bishop Irvine, who held the See under the "College," 1720-1726. T.S. p. 230 and Lawson p. 522.

him themselves at Carsebank, near Forfar, on S. John the Baptist's day (June 24th).

<sup>1</sup>Armed with letters from his Consecrators, Bishop White attended the Diocesan Synod of Dunblane on Sep. 4th, and was there welcomed as Bishop of the Diocese. His first Episcopal act was to appoint the Rev. Robert Douglas, Presbyter at Dunblane, "Praeses or Moderator" (Dean) of the Diocesan Clergy. On Aug. 25th, 1737, he again presided at his Synod, and dealt with a vacancy at Dunning. On July 11th, 1738, not yet having been formally received into the Episcopal Synod on account of the continued opposition of Primus Freebairn and Bishop Ochterlonie, he was at last accepted there, as related elsewhere, by a process which involved the supersession of Primus Freebairn by Bishop Rattray, through the canonical action of the majority. On Nov. 7th of the same year, he constituted his Diocesan Synod again by letter, and communicated to its members the transactions of the Episcopal Synod of July 11th, which so closely concerned himself and them. At the same meeting he also had the Rev. J. Graeme of Souterton (near Dunning) with his people transferred into his own Diocese from that of Dunkeld, and warned the Rev. J. Conacher of Gartmore, beyond Aberfoyle, against marrying couples without previous proclamation of Banns. On Jan. 2nd and 15th, 1739, he wrote two letters to Bishop Rattray<sup>2</sup> asking that Prelate to use his influence with Sir Alexander Ramsay to procure a bursary whereby to enable him to have his son educated at S. Andrews, and detailing to him the steps which he had taken in Mr. Conacher's case by way of censuring that Presbyter for his laxity about observing the proper forms in celebrating marriages. Between Sept. 26th, 1739, and Oct. 1740, the Bishop administered Baptism in S. Andrews on several occasions after the death of Mr. Morrice.<sup>3</sup> On Oct. 9th, 1739, he wrote a letter to his Synod, at which the Rev. Robert Lindsay's claim to Auchterarder and Dunning was allowed. On June 17th, 1740, he again wrote to Bishop Rattray, informing him that his son had finished with S. Andrews, but that the bursary would still be welcome to enable him to complete his education. (And here we may mention that in the spring of 1743 a young Deacon, called Robert White, appears in Dundee,<sup>4</sup> as much trusted by Bishop Raitt in the Fyffe affair; and in later years reference is several times made to a clerical son of Bishop White who is credited by the writer with being somewhat conceited). On Sept. 10th, 1740, the Bishop was again present in his Synod and reported there what he had done by way of discipline in the matter of Mr. Conacher's irregular marriages, and ordered a Fast throughout his Diocese on account of "the continued rotting rains and shaking winds."

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is mostly drawn from the MS. *Dunblane Register*.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* 286-7.

<sup>3</sup> T.T.O. p. 16 Ap1

<sup>4</sup> *An Instructed Account*, pp. 60-2-3; 53-6.

On Feb. 12th, 1741, he sent a letter to the Synod which was engaged in carrying through the " trials " of George Innes, Tutor at Duncrub, for the Diaconate. Somewhat later, he ordained the same candidate Presbyter, in view of his leaving for a charge in another Diocese—" Cujus discessum aegre sustinemus," alike because of the worth of the ordinand and the difficulty of filling up his place at Dunning.<sup>1</sup> This probably marks Mr. Innes's settlement at Balgowan, in the Diocese of Dunkeld.

The circumstances of the Bishop's resignation of Dunblane and his election to Fife will be found detailed in Chapter IX., and that brings us down to the date of Bishop Alexander's Consecration.

(4) The *Right Rev. James Rait* was *Bishop of Brechin*. He was born Feb. 9th, 1689, N.S.<sup>2</sup> It is reasonable to suppose that he was the son of the Rev. Robert Rait, one of the Ministers of Dundee before the Revolution,<sup>3</sup> who, along with his colleague, the Rev. Robert Norrie, continued to act as Pastor to the outed Churchmen of that town, and died in 1704. He was ordained Deacon by Bishop Rose<sup>4</sup> in Oct., 1712, and Priest in June, 1713,<sup>5</sup> and received letters of institution on Aug. 17, 1713, to the charge of Kirriemuir from the same Prelate. There he officiated for three years, receiving however no stipend, because it was paid over to the Presbyterian Minister, who was ordained in a field, and not allowed by the parishioners to enter the Church.<sup>6</sup> In 1727, on the death of his father's old colleague, Robert Norrie (who had in the meantime continued on in Dundee, and become Bishop of Angus and Mearns in the College interest), he was invited, after an election, by the Managers of the Dundee Congregation to succeed the late Bishop as their Pastor, and despite a somewhat warm controversy, he received deliberate Institution as such from the Bishop of Edinburgh,<sup>6</sup> i.e. the Right Rev. Jn. Fullarton, who had succeeded Bishop Rose. Being, however, a determined adherent of the " Diocesan " and " Usager " party, he proved unacceptable to a powerful section of the flock, with the result that there was a split, and he organised his supporters into a second Congregation at the Yeaman Shore in the town,<sup>7</sup> leaving the others at the Seagate to the charge of Rev. John Ochterlonie, who succeeded Bishop Norrie<sup>8</sup> as " College " Bishop of Angus and Mearns. On Bishop Ochterlonie's death in 1742, Mr. Rait was proposed as his successor in the See. Whereupon

<sup>1</sup> Case of Ordination Certificates in T.C.

<sup>2</sup> *Lawson*, p. 321.

<sup>3</sup> *An Instructed Account*, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> T.S. 91.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Walker's *Charge* of 1832, p. 36 of *Appendix*.

<sup>6</sup> *An Instructed Account*, p. 18-19-20; also *Scotich. V.* pp. 240-1-2. T.S. 162.

<sup>7</sup> *An Instructed Account*, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> Bishop Norrie's title was disputed by Bishop Rattray, who claimed the See from 1727 to 1731. Bishop J. Falconer preceded them 1720-1723.

the Rev. Robert Lyon, now Chaplain to Mr. Bowdler at Stretton in Bedfordshire, wrote to Mr. Alexander :—

“ I shall be longing now to hear of the Angus election. I heard that a Mandate was gone north for [Bishop] D[unbar]’s name to it, and hope that Mr. Rait will be the man.”

He was duly elected by the Clergy of the Diocese, and consecrated in Edinburgh on Oct. 4th, 1742, by Bishops Rattray, Keith, and White.<sup>1</sup> The anonymously published Pamphlet of 120 octavo pages, entitled *An Instructed Historical Account of the Settlement in the Episcopal Congregation of Dundee in 1727, and of the Intrusion there in 1743, Printed in the year MDCCLIV.*, from which most of the foregoing particulars are derived,<sup>2</sup> came from his hands. The Rev. R. Lyon sums up his character in a short phrase, which very well fits in with all that we know about him :—“ He was a good and worthy man, but *crabbed*.”

By the death of Bishop Ochterlonie, and Mr. Rait’s accession to the Bench, there ceased to be any Bishops inheriting the old College traditions,<sup>3</sup> and the “ Diocesans ” henceforth had things their own way in the Episcopal Synod.

(5) The *Right Rev. William Falconar* was Bishop of Moray. “ He was a Morayshire man, a native of Elgin, and the son of Alexander Falconar, a merchant there, by his wife Jean, daughter of William King of Newmill, Provost of the burgh.”<sup>4</sup> In 1728, before he was of the canonical age, he was recommended to Bishop Dunbar for Ordination to the Diaconate by certain of the Clergy<sup>4</sup>:—

“ R.R. Father in God—The Bearer, William Falconer, is a young man of right principles and not only blameless but exemplary in his life. He has from his earliest years showed a more than ordinary genius for letters and distinguished himself by a gravity and discretion uncommon amongst those of the same age, which (with his descent from the Rev. Mr. William Falconer, Parson of Dyke, and the Right Rev. Bishop Colin Falconer, one of your predecessors in this See) seem to have pointed him out for the Holy Ministry. We have taken several specimens of his knowledge, in which he has acquit himself so well as to leave no objection to his being instantly promoted to Holy Orders, but that he is not yet arrived at the Canonical age.”

Bishop Dunbar received the recommendation favourably, and :—

<sup>1</sup> T.S., p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> See also *A True Narrative*. Edinburgh, Sands, 1745.

<sup>3</sup> Skinner’s Hist., p. 649.

<sup>4</sup> C.’s M., 116, 111, 110.

"Ordered him Deacon on Monday after Whitsunday in the Oratory of the Countess of Erroll at Slains after the manner of the Church of England used in Scotland."<sup>1</sup>

His first charge was at Forres,<sup>1</sup> but :—

"On Sept. 10th, 1741, Mr. Falconer was consecrated at Alloa by Bishops Rattray, Keith, and White as Coadjutor to Bishop Keith for the Diocese of Orkney and Caithness."<sup>2</sup>

Thereupon he resigned the pastoral charge of Forres. In his farewell Sermon,<sup>3</sup> preached on Aug. 8th, 1742, in which he gives his people some remarkably definite Church teaching on the Apostolic Succession, occurs the following pleasant personal passage :—

"May the same kind reception and encouragement which my Ministry has found among you, be transferred with the duty and burden of it, to him who succeeds me. Indeed, I have received so many instances of your good-will, so many signal testimonies of the love and regard of some of the most worthy of my people, that I take this public opportunity of acknowledging my obligations to you and returning you my solemn thanks for them."

He now returned to his native Elgin, where he soon built a Church, because the "hired house" hitherto in use, became too small for the Congregation; and, no sooner had he made the move than he began to be spoken of for the Bishopric of Moray, which had been vacant since Bishop Dunbar resigned it in 1733. On Aug. 26th, 1742, the Rev. Robert Lyon of Stretton wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

"F[alconar] I hope will soon be Bishop of Moray, as well as Incumbent of Elgin. *Sit faustum!*"

and accordingly at Michaelmas<sup>4</sup> (Sept. 29), 1742 :—

"The Clergy of Moray met at Keith and (petitioned the Primus for a Mandate to elect a Bishop). The meeting being so few in number merely signed a Deed of Election and ordered it to be forwarded to the others. It was unanimously in favour of Mr. William Falconer, presently residing in Elgin, as well on account of his great learning and exemplary piety and probity, as of his being acceptable to the Laity."

On Nov. 1st, Bishop Alexander wrote to Bishop Keith :—

"I heartily rejoice at the forwardness Bishop Falconer's Settlement seems to be in."

<sup>1</sup> C.'s M., 111, 116.

<sup>2</sup> T.S. 286.

<sup>3</sup> An MS. of which is in my possession.

<sup>4</sup> C.'s M., 115-6, where full particulars are given.

Alike from the foregoing and from the events of later years, Bishop Falconar gives us the impression of being a scholarly, unbusinesslike, devout, and able man. Like Bishop Keith, he used the Chrism in Confirmation.

Such was the Bench of Bishops, to which Bishop Alexander was called on Aug. 19th, 1743.



## CHAPTER VI.

### 1743-4.—*The Diocese of Dunkeld.*

Before going on to trace the course of the new Bishop's conduct of affairs, it will be convenient to follow up the account of his brother Prelates, given in the previous chapter, with a similar notice, so far as is possible, of the Clergy, over whom he was now called to preside.

But first it may be remarked that the reader who desires to find a delightful account of the country embraced in the Diocese, both historical and picturesque, will find what he wants in Chap. II. of Bishop John Wordsworth's "*Episcopate of Charles Wordsworth.*"<sup>1</sup>

Coming, however, to the Presbyters, who are revealed in MSS. sources as carrying on the Church's work within its boundaries at the time of Bishop Alexander's accession to the See, and premising that, for convenience of reference throughout this volume, they will be taken in the alphabetical order of their charges, we find that they were as follows:—

(1) *Alyth.* The *Rev. Francis Crombie* was the Presbyter here. The earliest extant notice of him occurs about the year 1732 when Bishop Rattray appointed him Synod Clerk.<sup>2</sup> On Aug. 30th, 1741, he exchanged duty with the Incumbent of Blairgowrie. He did so again on Nov. 29th of the same year, officiating on this occasion, not in Blairgowrie itself, but in the Chapel at Mill-hill. On Aug. 8th, 1742, it was he who baptized the same brother-Presbyter's son, John. On Sept. 5th of that year, his friend came over from Blairgowrie and officiated for him, and, as there was on that day no service at Blairgowrie, it almost looks as if some pressing cause, like illness, on the part of Mr. Crombie, must have occurred. On Oct. 1st, 1742, our Presbyter again preached at Blairgowrie, taking as his text, S. Matt. xxvi. 28, "For this is my Blood." Evidently it was a Sermon designed to prepare his hearers for the reception of the Holy Communion, which was administered two days afterwards. On May 20th, 1743, Mr. Crombie once more preached on a similar occasion, this time from S. Luke xiv. 23-4, "Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in."<sup>3</sup> He took part in all the meetings, which resulted in the harmonious election of Bishop Alexander to the See in the summer of 1743.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> London, Longmans, Green, & Co., 1899.

<sup>2</sup> Synod Clerk's MSS. of Dunkeld.

<sup>3</sup> Blairgowrie M.S. *Session Book*.

<sup>4</sup> MS. *Dunkeld Diocesan Register*.

(2) *Ardrie-dynat*. The Presbyter in this locality, which is in the neighbourhood of Aberfeldy and Strathtay, was the *Rev. George Robertson*. Like others in the more distant parts of the Diocese, he took no part in the election of Bishop Alexander, but he was present at the Ordination of Duncan Cameron to the Diaconate at Fortingall on July 5th, 1744,<sup>1</sup> and signed the Diocesan Declaration against Bishop Smith (which will be explained further on) on Oct. 22nd, 1744,<sup>2</sup> and by that act showed that he was loyal to his own Bishop.

(3) *Balgowan*. The Presbyter of this charge, which is situated between Perth and Crieff, was the *Rev. George Innes*. The earliest mention of him has already been recorded in our sketch of Bishop White. He started his career as tutor at Dun-crub; stood his "Trials" for the Diaconate before the Synod of Dunblane on Feb. 12th, 1741, and shortly afterwards, while ministering at Dunning, received a call elsewhere, presumably to Balgowan, and, with a view to taking up his duties there, was ordained Priest by Bishop White, who, as we saw, was very reluctant to part with him.<sup>3</sup> On "May 16th, 1742, Mr. Innes of Dunning, officiated at Blairgowrie," his text being S. Luke xix. 40, "Christ weeping over Jerusalem"; on "July 4, 1742, Mr. Innes officiated at Mill-hill, Blairgowrie, taking as his text S. Luke xii. 7, 'The Hairs of our Head are all numbered.'<sup>4</sup>; and two days after Bishop Alexander's Consecration, *i.e.* on "Aug. 21st, 1743, Mr. Innes, now at Balgowan, officiated, text 1 Cor. i. 8, 'Who shall also confirm you unto the end.'" He attended and voted with the rest of his brethren at all the meetings, which led up to the election of Bishop Alexander.<sup>5</sup>

(4) *Blair Athol*. The *Rev. Walter Stewart* was brother of the Laird of Orchill. In the *Dunkeld Register* we read that he was "ordained Deacon by Bishop George Haliburton of Aberdeen at Denhead, Feb. 16th, 1711."<sup>6</sup> He went immediately to Perth as assistant to the *Rev. Henry Murray*, Presbyter there. Along with the latter, he was arraigned before the Perth Presbytery in the autumn of the same year, and a full account of the process against him is contained in the MS. *Perth Presbytery Record*.<sup>7</sup> The Ministers were particularly angry with him because he not only was "intruding" in the Fair City, but more especially because, as they declared, he had originally been a stout Presbyterian, and had now "apostatized from and renounced his former principles."

The Toleration Act of 1712 baffled the Presbytery in their attack, and saved Mr. Stewart, but only for a time. After the

<sup>1</sup> D.R.      <sup>2</sup> Ep. Chest. 464.

<sup>4</sup> Blairgowrie MS.

<sup>6</sup> And Priest March 11th, 1712.

<sup>7</sup> Given in my *Ep. H. Perth*, 71-80.

<sup>3</sup> Case of Ordination Certificate T.C.

<sup>5</sup> D.R.

unfortunate end of the first Jacobite Rising (1715) he was obliged to flee from Perth and from Auchterarder, for which, it seems, he provided Services, while he lived in the Fair City. At some unascertained date (perhaps 1722) he became Presbyter at Doune, where he was much liked by the people. In a letter of some years later, the Blair Athol Managers said to him :—<sup>1</sup>

“ Having reason to believe that your present Auditory would be very unwilling to part with you, and you as loath to leave them, we have hitherto deferred writing to you.”

He remained at Doune till 1728. In October of that year the charge of Blair-Athol became vacant through the death of the Rev. Duncan Stewart (Uncle of our Mr. Stewart) who had ministered there since before the Revolution, and the Managers wrote (in unintentionally humorous terms<sup>2</sup>) to the Presbyter of Doune inviting him to return to his native district in succession to his deceased relative. Fortunately before this missive was sent, its unintended quaintness was noticed by its authors, and a more appropriate composition substituted from which we quote the following sentences :—

“ Ever since the death of our late Minister we have had an eye on you as the properest Person and most acceptable to the generality of those concerned in our Meeting House of Athole. . . . Now, since we see the difficulty of finding any other who knows the language [*i.e.* Gaelic] and genius of the People, we take upon us in the name of all the Gentlemen and others of our Persuasion in this County to call and invite you to be our Minister.”

They promised him £25 a year, and he was settled amongst them on Oct. 29th, 1728.

No mention of Mr. Stewart is made in the *Dunkeld Register* till the day of his death many years later, and it is only then that his Ordination is recorded. Considering what a staunch and influential Churchman he was, and how much he was called upon to suffer, this is certainly strange. However, there he was at Blair Athole, or rather Kilmaveonaig, when Bishop Alexander succeeded Bishop Rattray, and there can be no doubt that he was loyal to his new Diocesan.

(5) *Blairgowrie*. The Presbyter here was the Rev. James Hill. Till 1913 what was known of this Clergyman consisted of the information supplied in the *Dunkeld Diocesan Register*, and from that all we learned was that he attended the meetings in 1743, which led up to the election of Bishop Alexander, and voted with his brethren. But in 1913 the Bishop of S. Andrews picked up at an Edinburgh bookstall what proved to be Mr.

<sup>1</sup> B.'s *Kil.*, p. 69-74.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ep. H. Perth*, p. 197, and B's *Kilmaveonaig*, p. 69.

Hill's MS. *Session Register*, and from this there is a large amount of fresh information to be gathered concerning both Mr. Hill and also his neighbours. What there is of the latter is incorporated in these pages under the heads of the various charges, and what concerns himself is as follows. He began his work at Blairgowrie, and the neighbouring locality of Mill-hill, upon Dec. 21st, 1740, and after that the entries for every Sunday occur regularly.<sup>1</sup>

Let us first gather what we can concerning the Celebration of the *Holy Communion* in this typical country charge during the generation which followed the victory of liturgical forms over the Pre-Revolution *extempore* mode, described so vividly by Bishop Rattray.<sup>2</sup> An examination of the entries shews that the Rev. J. Hill at this period administered the Sacrament about four times in the year. This was a great advance upon previous custom, for Bishop Rattray tells us that, before the Revolution, "the Holy Eucharist was not celebrated, in most places at least, above *once a year, if so often*."<sup>2</sup> He divided the administrations between three places *i.e.* Blairgowrie (twice), Mill-hill (once), and Whiteloch (once). Previous to the Celebration tokens were distributed. For instance, on July 19th, 1741, the entry is :—

"The Holy Sacrament was intimated against Aug. 2nd, and tokens distributed."

On March 29th, 1741, Aug. 2nd, 1741, and other dates, it is noted that the Sacrament was administered in the afternoon. This would be in accordance with unquestioned and long-standing Scottish custom.<sup>3</sup> To those who were prevented by sickness from coming at all, Mr. Hill was accustomed to minister privately. There are instances of his having done so on July 26th, 1742, and Aug. 12th, 1742. Nor ought we to pass from the subject without noticing that, by way of preparation, in addition to the distribution of tokens, special sermons were preached a day or two previously, often as on Oct. 1st, 1742, by a specially-invited neighbour, such as the Rev. Fr. Crombie.

*Baptism.*—In the years 1741-2, the numbers of those baptized were 4 and 10 respectively. Amongst these were two of Mr. Hill's own children, *i.e.* Elizabeth on Jan. 31st, 1741; and John on Aug. 8th, 1742.

*Confirmation.*—The Laying on of Hands was administered once between Dec. 21st, 1740, and the Consecration of Bishop Alexander on Aug. 19th, 1743, giving us a welcome glimpse of a well-known Prelate :—

<sup>1</sup> There are also given the Congregational Accounts for 1710-17.

<sup>2</sup> An Sc. Off. 49-50.

<sup>3</sup> Many had to walk very long distances, and as for the roads :—

"If you'd seen these roads before they were made,  
You'd hold up your hands and bless General Wade."

See Graham, p. 38.

" *March 20th, 1742.*—Patrick Horn in Bauchie was baptized at Blair, and confirmed together with Anna Coal and Andrew Stewart by Dr. Rattray, Bishop of Dunkeld, at Glasclune<sup>1</sup> the same day."

Besides the *Forenoon Service*, which was held regularly every Sunday, *Evening Service* is noted during the summer half of the year. Thus on March 15th, 1741, we have the entry "Evening Prayer began," and on Nov. 5th, "Evening Prayer given over for the season." The greater *Festivals* and *Fasts* were observed, and occasionally *Harvest Thanksgivings*. Thus on Nov. 1st, 1741, we read:—

"A Public Thanksgiving for ye plentiful Crop and pleasant Harvest advertized to be observed thro' Dr. Rattray's District, Thursday, Nov. 5th."

(6) *Carsebank*. Of this country district, lying about two miles east of Forfar, the *Rev. David Guthrie* was the Pastor. The earliest trace of him to be found is on a small torn MS.<sup>2</sup> which reads as follows:—

"By Mr. DAVID GUTHRIE."

"The Promotion of the Right Rev. Bishop White has given Occasion to several Gentlemen of fertile Invention to entertain their Company and Correspondents at the expense of their own Veracity and other People's Reputation without the least Regard to the sacred character of the best and greatest Man in the Church. But such has been their Misfortune in this Corner that most of their Romances have carried a Refutation in their own Bosom."

Bearing in mind the account of Bishop White's Consecration as already given,<sup>3</sup> the reader will see that what Mr. Guthrie here says, amounts to this:—"There is much excited fault-finding going on over the latest action of Bishop Rattray and his Colleagues in consecrating Bishop White here at Carsebank, without the concurrence of the Primus. But we in this Corner, where the sacred Service was held, know that the stories which are flying about to the discredit of Bishop Rattray, the best and greatest man in the Church, are without foundation, and that they carry their own Refutation along with them."

Now, if that is a fair statement of Mr. Guthrie's meaning, it seems clear that he identifies himself with both the locality and the time of the Consecration, and, since the locality was Carsebank, and the time 1735, we conclude that our Presbyter was Incumbent there as early as the year mentioned.<sup>4</sup> We

<sup>1</sup> A few miles N.W. of Blairgowrie.

<sup>2</sup> No. 417 Ep. Ch.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. in Chap. III. p. 12, and Chap. V. p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> This conclusion is correct. See T.S. p. 274.

also see quite evidently from his expressed loyalty to Bishop Rattray that he was a "Diocesan" and "Usager" in sentiment.

The only additional information<sup>1</sup> concerning him, which we have, belonging to this period, is that he attended the meeting at Meigle on June 28th, 1743, and signed the Application for a Mandate, and also the meeting of Aug. 9th in that year, giving his vote for Mr. Alexander and signing the Deed of Election.

(7) *Cortachy*.—The Presbyter here was the *Rev. John Ramsay*. The *Dunkeld Register* is the only source in which he is mentioned, and therefore all we know concerning him up to this date is that he took the same part, as Mr. Guthrie did, in the election of Bishop Alexander.

(8) *Forfar*. Of this charge the *Very Rev. William Seton* was Incumbent. Mr. Dill in his *Episcopacy in Forfar*<sup>2</sup> states that it was in 1727 that he succeeded the Rev. James Small, who had shepherded the flock since its ejection from the Parish Church at the Revolution. The following interesting document<sup>3</sup> gives us our next view of him. Its date is probably about 1732, as it was early in that year that Bishop Rattray was appointed Bishop of Dunkeld under the *Concordate*, but, of course, it may possibly be slightly later :—

"I, Thomas Rattray, by the Providence of God, Bishop of Dunkeld, Perth, etc., finding that there occur several necessary Occasions for the Presbyters of my District to meet together to take under Tryals, Candidates for the holy Ministry, to deliberate upon Cases of Discipline, and to do sundry other things, for which they may have Occasion for the Advice and Assistance of one another, that so the common concerns of all may be pursued with the Unanimity that is requisite and the Peace of the Church further provided for, find it Incumbent on me and hereby do constitute the whole Presbyters of my District into a Presbytery, and hereby constitute and appoint the Reverend Mr. William Seton at Forfar, Praeses, and the Reverend Mr. Francis Crombie at Alyth, Clerk; and cloath the said Mr. Seton with power to convocate his Brethren, as he shall have my Instructions, or shall see Cause, from Time to Time, and to preside in their Meetings, till such Time as I, or my Successor in Office, shall see Occasion for revoking or altering this my Deed; and that any three of my Presbyters with the Praeses shall make a Quorum, if the rest be called and cannot conveniently meet."

So authorised<sup>4</sup>, he presided over the election of Bishop Alexander, summoning the Clergy to Meigle on June 28th, 1743;

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

<sup>2</sup> p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Synod Clerk of Dunkeld's MSS.

<sup>4</sup> In substance he was Dean though Bishop Rattray did not use the name.

taking the chair at the meeting; forwarding the request of the Presbyters for a Mandate to the Bishops; summoning them again to Meigle on Aug. 9th; presiding over them when assembled; and being the first to sign the Deed of Election together with the letter to Mr. Alexander announcing the result. Finally he was confirmed, as we have already seen, in the Decanal office by the new Bishop.

The Dean contributed<sup>1</sup> a description of Forfar to Walter Macfarlane's *Topographical Collection*, now preserved in three MSS. volumes in the Advocate's Library, Edinburgh. When he comes to the ecclesiastical part he, very characteristically of the times, describes the Parish Church as one of the only two public buildings in the town, the other being the Tolbooth. To our disappointment he says not a word about his own "Meeting House" nor of his Congregation, and from that we may no doubt conclude that his Chapel was of the very unpretentious kind common at that period. He gives us a welcome glimpse, however, into his neighbour, the Rev. David Guthrie's district:—

"The Priory of Restinnet (he says) lyes near a mile directly to the east of Forfar, the steeple whereof, built of square stones, is yet standing, also some of the walls of the Church and Cloister."

(9 and 10). *Fortingal*. Our information concerning this remote region of the Diocese is very fragmentary. There is, indeed, only one mention of it in the *Diocesan Register* and none of any kind before Bishop Alexander's Consecration. But there is a letter, written by Dean Seton to his superior and dated Dec. 16th, 1744, in which he mentions the names of two Clergy, one of whom was the *Rev. Duncan Cameron* "at Nether Blairish in Fortingale," and the other a *Mr. Rolton*, whose name was linked with his. The Dean admits that "there is no easy access to them" but describes them as being "*in that quarter of your [i.e. the Bishop's] District*" and, as such, to be called upon to sign a certain Diocesan document. Now, although this reference is dated the year after the Bishop's accession to his office (and indeed Mr. Duncan Cameron was only ordained by him on July 4th, 1744), yet the Dean's reference is proof that immediately before Bishop Alexander's Consecration there was a flock of Church people in Fortingal. It is curious that it is only once mentioned in the *Dunkeld Register*. Perhaps its Clergy were excused from attending the Diocesan meetings on account of the remoteness of their charges. It seems as if the two presided over different Congregations, but that is not quite certain.

(11) *Glamis*. The Presbyter here was the *Rev. David Fyfe*. It was in 1736 that he was appointed to the charge,<sup>2</sup> which he held

<sup>1</sup> Dill 15-18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Hist. P.*, p. 133.

along with Glenboy, having been ordained in 1712 by Bishop A. Rose.<sup>1</sup> At the time of his institution to Glamis, the Managers at Perth were negotiating with him, intending to settle him as colleague to their frail old Pastor, but they had never informed Bishop Rattray of their negotiations. Meantime Lady Mary Lyon invited the Bishop to the Castle and successfully prevailed upon him to settle Mr. Fyfe as Presbyter at Glamis. It was an unfortunate appointment, for Mr. Fyfe was a man of very different character from any of the foregoing Presbyters. He absented himself from the meetings of the election of a successor to Bishop Rattray, and indeed at the present time, as will soon appear only too fully, was in rebellion against the Scottish Bishops.

(12) *Kinclaven*. Of this charge, the *Rev. James Dundas* was the Pastor. He also, like his two brethren, *Rev. David Fife* and *Rev. George Robertson*, made no appearance, although invited to be present<sup>2</sup> at the Episcopal Election. In his general tone of thought, indeed, he sympathised with the Presbyter of Glamis, but he had not yet gone so far as his friend in defying the Bishops. His ostensible reason, therefore, for absenting himself from the election was evidently the fact that he was in process of leaving the Diocese and being settled at Rossie in that of Brechin. For on May 18th, 1743, the Managers of that Congregation had addressed the following letter to Bishop Raitt :—<sup>3</sup>

“ Right Rev. Sir,—It was put upon me by the others concerned, to have waited upon you and acquainted you of our designing Mr. James Dundas for our Minister, and to have him settled either at Longforgan or Rossie, as should be thought most convenient ; but, as Business will not allow my coming to Dundee this Day, I hope you will excuse this Trouble, which comes to ask in name of all concerned, your Concurrence to Mr. Dundas’s Settlement. And, to convince you that we never designed any irregular Step, I refer you to the enclosed . . . . ”

Your most obedt. humble Servant,

JAMES MYLNE.

“ The enclosed ” was what Bishop Raitt described as “ a very Canonical Call ” and accordingly he replied<sup>4</sup> that :—

“ As soon as there was a Fund ascertained for Mr. Dundass’s Subsistence among them and some other steps of a regular Settlement taken, they should readily have his Concurrence, and in the meantime he frankly gave his Consent to his officiating for them.”

<sup>1</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> D. R.

<sup>3</sup> *An Instructed Account*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *An Instructed Account*, p. 35.

The "other steps of a regular Settlement," which he still desiderated, before the matter could be considered formally complete, included the concurrence of Mr. Dundass's present Diocesan, Bishop Rattray. Mr. Dundass explained the want of such letters commendatory thus :—

"He applied to him" [*i.e.* Bishop Rattray], he said, "as the local Bishop for his Concurrence and Assistance in his proposed settlement at Rossie, and excused his want of dimissory Letters from the District of Dunkeld upon the account of his having been informed, when he was upon the road to Craighall to procure them, that Bishop Rattray was gone to Edinburgh."

It was indeed true, as we already know, that the Primus had gone to Edinburgh intending to preside over the Episcopal Synod to be held there at the end of April. It was also true that he never returned home, and therefore we can well believe that, when the consequent election to Dunkeld was taking place, Mr. Dundass was availing himself of Bishop Raitt's permission to officiate at Rossie, although his name had not yet been formally removed from the roll of the Dunkeld Clergy. It would, however, have been more polite on his part if he had sent a letter of apology to the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

(13) *Kirriemuir*. The Presbyterian here was the *Rev. William Gray*. He was the son of William Gray, Merchant, Stonehaven, who on May 10th, 1738, subscribed £9 Scots towards the building of the new Meeting House in the town of his residence, and died before 1740.<sup>2</sup> Two points are certain about the son in Kirriemuir. One, that on Jan. 31st, 1741, "Mr. Gray, Presbyterian at Kirriemuir," baptized Elizabeth, the daughter of the Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie,<sup>3</sup> and the other that he attended the meetings held for the purpose of electing a successor to Bishop Rattray, and registered his vote in favour of Mr. Alexander. A third piece of evidence is also in our hands. An old MS. Sermon on the text Prov. xiv. 6 ("A Scornor seeketh wisdom and findeth it not") obtained from Kirriemuir is extant, the flyleaf of which bears the following note :—

"Kirr. July 29th, 1734. Kirr. July 4th, 1736 p.m. Kirr. July 30th, 1738 a.m.

There can be no reasonable doubt that this is one of the Rev. William Gray's Discourses, and, if so, then we know that his Ministry in Kirriemuir began at least nine years before the accession of Bishop Alexander.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dean Skinner in his letter to Rev. Norman Sievwright speaks of Mr. Dundass as no longer alive in 1767—p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Philip, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Blairgowrie Session Book. "

<sup>4</sup> During the Incumbency of Canon Douglas at Kirriemuir, 1851-1899, there was a large pile of MSS. 18th century Sermons in the Vestry. During the vacancy which succeeded his death, they disappeared and thus we were no doubt deprived of many historical notes from which interesting inferences could have been drawn.

(14) *Meigle*. The Presbyter here was the Rev. James Crokatt. The only information concerning him which we have up to this date,<sup>1</sup> is that he was present at the meeting held in Meigle on June 28th, 1743, but he was absent from the election of Aug. 9th. Probably he was ill. There are two reasons for thinking so, the first being the circumstance that the Dean subscribed the Deed of Bishop Alexander's election on his behalf, and the second that probably Meigle was chosen as the place of Assembly to give him the chance of attending.

(15) *Nairne*<sup>2</sup> and *Logie*.<sup>3</sup> Although not mentioned in the *Dunkeld Register* at this time, it seems clear from two facts that there was a congregation here in 1743 :—

The first is that there was a Chaplain, Mr. R—t J—n, at Logie, as long ago as 1722, and as for Nairne, we are told that while Mr. Andrew Gerard :—

“ Was still in the Order of Deacons, several Clergymen solicited Bishop [Alexander] Rose to promote him to the Order of the Priesthood, because, they said, having preached and exercised the other parts of a Deacon's Office in young Balgowan's family, where he has been Chaplain of late with universal applause, we could not refuse to give your Lordship the trouble of this recommendation that he may be preferred to the superior degree of Presbyter, and thereby enabled farther to serve and promote the interests of the Church, especially when Providence now determines his residence in my Lord Nairne's family, *whither a goodly Congregation of well-disposed country People continued to resort for the benefit of Worship.*”

So much for the first fact, which is taken from the past. The second is taken from the future, and it is that one of Bishop Alexander's first cares, after his Consecration, was to ordain a Clergyman for the united charge of Nairne and Logie.

The inference is that there was a Congregation here for the present, but that in the meantime they were without a Pastor.

(16) *Perth*.<sup>4</sup> A Congregation had existed here since the Revolution. In the reign of William and Mary, it was in a state of chaos owing to persecution. After the accession of Queen Anne, *i.e.* in 1703, the charge was organised, and the Rev. Henry Murray appointed Incumbent. After the battle of Sheriffmuir

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

<sup>2</sup> Murray, Lord Nairne. The family seat was Stanley House in the Parish of Auchtergaven, an old mansion amid magnificent scenery on the banks of the Tay, near the village of Stanley.—*Lawson*, p. 527.

<sup>3</sup> Drummond of Logie-Almond, in Moneydie, Perthshire.—*Lawson*, p. 527.

<sup>4</sup> For a full and detailed account of the Perth Congregation from the Revolution onwards, see my *Episcopal History of Perth*, Jackson, Perth, 1894 (420 pp.)

(1715) he and his assistant, the Rev. Walter Stewart, had to flee the city. In 1722, however, Mr. Murray returned to Perth and continued there till his death in 1735.

In his latter years he needed the Services of a Colleague. Accordingly the *Rev. Laurence Drummond*, "of the noble family of Perth,"<sup>1</sup> who was Chaplain to Sir John Moncreiffe of Moncreiffe, at the Bridge of Earn,<sup>2</sup> came to his aid. Mr. Drummond, himself, however, "was but a valetudinary man" and, the congregation being much distracted by the controversies of the day, which have been already explained, he soon required an Assistant in his own turn. Accordingly, after various negotiations, in the course of which, as we have seen, he narrowly escaped having the Rev. David Fyfe settled upon him, he secured (1738) the services of the *Rev. Robert Lyon* who had just been ordained Deacon at the age of 22,<sup>3</sup> and whose salary was fixed at £30.

Mr. Drummond himself was loyal to Bishop Rattray, but on account of the strong support which the "College" and "Anti-Usage" party enjoyed in his congregation, he tried for his own part to pursue the line of least resistance. But his youthful colleague was not only an ardent Jacobite, but also of enthusiastic and energetic character. He soon, therefore, "made history." He offended the Managers by daring to be ordained Priest by his Bishop without application to them. He took the unwise step of having the Communion tokens marked R.L. instead of L.D. He "next began to vent some of his Usage doctrines" and, after much heated controversy, in 1740 there was a schism. One half of the Congregation split off from the Bishop and Clergy, and called in the Rev. George Sempill by their own authority, who, having accepted the irregular call, was tried and deposed by Bishop Rattray, but nevertheless went on ministering in Perth. The other half, under the two Presbyters, remaining loyal to the Bishop, were obliged to provide themselves with a new Meeting House. Such was the unhappy state of Church matters in the Fair City at the time of Bishop Rattray's sudden death. At the election which followed, Mr. Drummond was too poorly to attend the meetings, but Mr. Lyon was present, and voted both for himself, and as proxy for his senior Colleague, in favour of Bishop Alexander.

Such was the clerical staff of the Diocese of Dunkeld at the time when Bishop Alexander succeeded Bishop Rattray in 1743.

<sup>1</sup> T.S. 330.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Hist., Perth*, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> My Copy of *Ep. Hist., Perth*, p. 136.

## CHAPTER VII.

### 1743.—*The Affair of David Fyffe.*

In the afternoon of Aug. 19th, the day on which Bishop Alexander was consecrated, a conference of Bishops was held in Bishop Keith's Chapel in Edinburgh, at which the following Prelates were present :—Robert Keith, Bishop of Fife and Caithness ; William Falconar, Bishop of Moray ; James Raitt, Bishop of Brechin ; and John Alexander, Bishop of Dunkeld.

At this meeting a letter from William Dunbar,<sup>1</sup> Bishop of Aberdeen, who excused himself on account of the infirmities of old age, was read. It began thus :—

“ Though I am far enough from pretending to limit or prescribe anything to my Brethren, yet I flatter myself to believe that it will not be unacceptable to them that an aged Brother, who cannot be with them, offer to their serious Considerations what he thinks very expedient, if not necessary, to be done at this Juncture, viz. :—That ye constitute yourselves a Synodical Meeting the day after the Consecration.”

This suggestion, as we know, was not a new idea on the part of the venerable writer, but only his formal opinion as the Senior Bishop, that that meeting should now be assembled, which had been delayed by the lamented death of Bishop Rattray. The conference therefore resolved that the deferred Synod should be held on the next day, *i.e.* Aug. 20th, 1743.

The transactions of this Synod were of an important nature, and had far-reaching results. The consideration of the greater part of them must be postponed to the next and following chapters. In the present we confine our attention to one difficult matter, in which our newly-consecrated Prelate became at once involved viz. :—*The Affair of David Fyffe.*

On the second day of the Synod, the following motion was passed :—

“ *Monday, Aug. 22nd.*—After Prayers were said and a Meeting constituted, a Complaint was offered to the Synod by Bishop Raitt, occasioned by an Intrusion upon his Episcopal Authority, acted in the Town of Dundee, by one David Fyffe, a Presbyter in the District of Dunkeld, and after some Discourse had passed thereupon, the Bishops

<sup>1</sup> D.R.

agreed to concur, as far as needful, in pronouncing the Sentence of Deposition against him, upon the Libel being found proven, after the examination of witnesses to that effect. And did appoint three of their number, viz. :—Bishops White, Falconar, and Alexander to attend the Trial at any place, which Bishop Raitt should think most proper within his own District."

In order that we may understand this unfortunate case, it will be necessary to give some account of Church matters in Dundee, and especially of the part taken in them by the accused Presbyter.

There were two congregations in that town, the one hitherto under the pastoral charge of Bishop Ochterlonie and his assistant, the Rev. James Goldman, which worshipped in the Seagate Chapel ; and the other, under the Rev. James Raitt, which worshipped in the Yeaman Shore Chapel. Now these two congregations were characterized by different ecclesiastical atmospheres. Those familiar with the general Church history of the period will know that Bishop Ochterlonie was the fighting champion of the Anti-Usage views, and the determined opponent of the great and learned Bishop Rattray. They will easily understand, therefore, that the Seagate congregation stood for the "low" traditions inherited from the days of Establishment. That forcibly appears from the following words<sup>1</sup> of Bishop Raitt :—

"We ourselves (he says, aiming at the Seagate Chapel) have known several old Clergymen,<sup>2</sup> otherwise very good people, who from an early advantage in their Education and Studies, or a long custom of extempory and private conceived Prayers, together perhaps with a conceit of their gifts that way, had contracted a sort of Aversion to Liturgic Worship altogether and could not without great difficulty be brought to the use even of the English Service."

On the other hand the Yeaman Shore people stood for the "high" traditions of the Usager and Diocesan party. At the same time, however, subsequent to the Concordate of 1731, the two congregations had succeeded in pursuing their respective paths side by side "very smoothly and agreeably."<sup>3</sup>

But in May, 1742, Bishop Ochterlonie died, and about the same time his assistant, Mr. Goldman, was forced to retire owing to bad health, and thus both the See of Brechin and the pastoral charge became vacant.

The Bishopric was filled by the election and Consecration of the Rev. James Raitt, who according to the custom of the time

<sup>1</sup> *The Intrusion*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Norrie, Bishop Ochterlonie's predecessor, is particularly in his mind.

<sup>3</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 52.

continued to be Pastor at the Yeaman Shore, and the vacancy in the Seagate Chapel was provided for by the institution of the Rev. William Robertson from Langside in Buchan.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, this Presbyter, although the managers declare they were ignorant of the circumstance, was a Usager in his sympathies, and after his settlement amongst them, there began to be a little restlessness in the flock.

At this juncture Bishop Raitt, remembering that the separation into two congregations had only taken place in 1727, suggested the idea of re-union. A deputation, therefore, from the Seagate Chapel was appointed to confer on the matter with the accredited representatives of the Yeaman Shore Congregation, and a meeting was held, at which an agreement in favour of union was reached and subsequently accepted at a meeting of the Seagate Congregation.<sup>2</sup> On Whitsunday, therefore :—

“ The Bishop, assisted by Mr. Robertsons and two Deacons, administered the Holy Eucharist precisely in the manner they had been accustomed to, except only the Distribution by the Scots Office, in the Seagate Meeting-House, to about 90 of that congregation and 120 of his own.”

On the surface, therefore, things looked well. It seemed as if the Church people of Dundee had been successfully drawn together. But in reality it was not so. On the one hand, although, as we have seen in the sketch of his life, Bishop Raitt was a good and strong man, yet in the words<sup>3</sup> of the Rev. R. Lyon he was “ crabbed enough.” While, therefore, his intentions in the matter were no doubt excellent, we may doubt whether his manner was ruled by the *suaviter in modo*. On the other hand the Managers were evidently bitterly prejudiced against his party, and were very self-assertive men. Accordingly they fixed on the method in which the Holy Eucharist had been celebrated at Whitsunday as a grievance. On that occasion Bishop Raitt had indeed used the English Office, to which the Seagate people were accustomed ; but, partly owing to the fact that the Scottish form of “ Distribution ” was shorter and more suitable to a large number of Communicants ; partly because he did not think it fair that all the yielding should be on the side of his own people ; and partly because even Bishop Ochterlonie had actually been accustomed to introduce features from the Scottish Office,<sup>4</sup> he had used the Scottish words of administration. Whether it was wise for him to have made even this slight variation at the present juncture it may be difficult to say ; but, however that may be, the opponents of union seized upon the circumstance as a grievance and, having drawn up a version of the

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion*, pp. 66-8.

<sup>4</sup> *The Intrusion*, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of March 12th, 1747.

history of the union to suit their own desires, declared that the Committee and Conference, which had carried the matter through, had acted *ultra vires*, and that consequently the union did not hold good. They declared that the whole movement was simply designed to deprive them of their independence and traditions.

On May 25th, 1743,<sup>1</sup> therefore, they sent a deputation to the Bishop :—

“ To ask him that he would lay his commands on Mr. Robertson for the strict and sole use of the English Office.”

Maintaining that he had, as a matter of fact, “ never communicated any one of them but precisely in the manner they had always been accustomed to,”<sup>2</sup> he informed them that :—

“ He could not do [what they wanted], since it was left discretionary to Mr. Robertson himself by a Synodical Deed of the whole National Church [*i.e.*, the Concordate of 1731], to which the late Ordinary [*i.e.*, Bishop Ochterlonie] of the place had been a subscriber ; but that in consequence of that same deed, he should as little interpose for the Scots Office.”

The result was that :—

“ Upon his not doing what he conceived was not in his power to do, they proceeded to disclaim his authority and to deny their being in Communion with him.”

They then appealed unsuccessfully to Mr. Robertson, and the following conversation took place between them :—

“ He [*i.e.*, Mr. Robertson] asked the Gentlemen, ‘ Are you in Communion with Bishop Raitt ? ’ To which they answered ‘ We wish well to all mankind. We are in Communion with Bishop Raitt, as far as he is in Communion with the Church. But, since he makes a real Breach of our Standard of Public Worship the terms of Communicating with him and thereby stumbles and offends our Consciences, it is no wonder we do not join him.’ ‘ Then (said he), as you are not in Union and Communion with the Bishop, I am not at freedom to practise either English, Scots, or any other Liturgy amongst you.’ ”<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding, however, that such words had passed between the two parties, it must be remembered that, whatever might be said of the Bishop’s claim to be Pastor of the Congregation by virtue of the recent act of union, he still had unquestioned rights over it as Bishop of the Diocese. Mr. Robertson, too, had unquestionably been instituted to the charge, before the union, by the Bishop on the nomination of the Managers, and could not lawfully be ejected

<sup>1</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 19.     *An Instructed Historical Account*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 21.

by the Managers alone. Nevertheless, the objective of the Managers now became to get rid of Mr. Robertson.

Accordingly, as Bishop Raitt states it :—

“ On<sup>1</sup> this by a Deed of the same date (May 30th, 1743,) they proceed, as far as they could, formally to depose him [*i.e.*, Mr. Robertson] by declaring all pastoral Relation between him and them to be dissolved.”

And, having thus deposed their Pastor, they proceeded to present a call to another Presbyter. According to their own narrative, however, what they did was to leave Mr. Robertson alone in the meantime, and assuming that the act of union had not made the Bishop their Senior Pastor, to elect a Senior Pastor. But in any case they were driving either the Bishop or Mr. Robertson out of the Pastorate.

The Presbyter whom they chose to fill the alleged vacancy in the charge was the Rev. David Fyffe, Incumbent of Glamis and Glenboy, “ who<sup>2</sup> had before given proof of his having small regard for the Bishop ” ; and, surely with some effrontery, they presented him to the Bishop for institution.

The latter, however,<sup>3</sup>

“ Still insisted upon the Union and on his being our Minister [*i.e.*, as Mr. Robertson's Senior Colleague in the collegiate charge<sup>4</sup>], and was pleased to say with some emotion ‘ *I am so far from concurring in this Settlement, that if Mr. Fyffe shall presume to come and settle amongst you, I will proceed against him with the highest censures.* ’ ”

Presume to come and settle amongst them was, nevertheless, precisely what Mr. Fyffe, on the authority of the Managers, did. Although they professed to be “ Episcopalians ” a Bishop was now to them a thing of no account. For themselves they said :—<sup>5</sup>

“ Since the Episcopal Church has been under a cloud, many worthy Pastors have been settled in Congregations at Edinburgh and in other places without any Concurrence from a Bishop and enjoyed their settlements peaceably.”

And for his part Mr. Fyffe roundly declared :—<sup>6</sup>

“ That he by no means reckoned himself under any Obligation to obey Mr. Raitt, because he could not look upon him as his rightful Ecclesiastical Superior, and *that* for the following reasons :—‘ I am (said Mr. Fyffe) ascertained from the Practice of the primitive Church and all the Reformed Church That neither Clergy nor Laity ought to submit to the

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 27.

<sup>6</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 25.

Authority of heterodox and schismatical Bishops but to shun them, as the Pestilence, that walketh at noon-day. That Mr. James Raitt is heterodox in his Principles and schismatical in his Practices, I think is most evident.' ”

It was about this time that Bishop Alexander first appeared upon the scene and *that*, we are glad to find, in a conciliatory and dignified manner. He offered to recall Mr. Fyffe to Glamis, which was of course in his Diocese. He was prepared to give him leave to use the English Liturgy as formerly, and he proposed to the Dundee gentlemen to pitch upon any other, who would officiate by the English Office.<sup>1</sup>

But by this time both Mr. Fyffe and the Managers were hot upon the war-path. They would not listen to compromise, and plunged into action :—<sup>2</sup>

“ The 24th July, being Sunday, the Managers with some others attended Mr. Fyffe to the Meeting-House. A little Time after, Mr. Robertson . . . came in with his gown on as usual. The Gentleman, a present Manager, who attended at the Door, made way for him, and opened his Seat-door. But, as soon as he spied Mr. Fyffe in the Pulpit, he walked out again without saying a word : nor did any of us speak to him.”

Bishop Raitt was not a meek man, but probably even a meek man would have now written the following letter, which he wrote to Mr. Fyffe on August 10th, and which was delivered to the offender by the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth and the Rev. Robert White, Deacon in Dundee :—<sup>3</sup>

“ Rev. Sir, I have sent you this to require you to come along with the Bearer to my House, to speak with me and give an Account of your Conduct in this Place, in intruding yourself into this Congregation without my allowance and in manifest Contempt for my Authority ; which if you refuse to do, I hereby discharge you from officiating any more in this Place, as you will answer it to your Ecclesiastical Superiors and under the Penalty of incurring the Censures of the Church. This is, Rev. Sir, from your humble Servant, James Raitt.”

And then we read :—<sup>4</sup>

“ Before proceeding with the Trial the Bishop sent a further Message still by Mr. White to Mr. Fyffe—That he was extremely loath to proceed to extremities and therefore that, if he would still return to his Duty, all procedure against him would be stopped. To which Mr. Fyffe’s answer was—

<sup>1</sup> *Scotichion*. V., p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> *A True Narrative*, pp. 28-40.

<sup>2</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *The Intrusion*, p. 62.

"That he disowned the Bishop's Authority entirely and that he might take his course, as he would do his."

The foregoing narrative has been necessary in order that the appeal made on August 22nd to the Synod of Bishops, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, and the consequent commission given to Bishops Alexander and Falconar, and their subsequent conduct in the affair, might be understood.

These two Episcopal assessors were present at the Diocesan Synod held on August 31st by Bishop Raitt in his Chapel on the Yeaman Shore for the trial of the offending Presbyter. The latter failed to appear. The charge, supported by proofs and witnesses, was divided under three heads,<sup>1</sup> the upshot of which was that the accused "in direct opposition to the Bishop's expressed and repeated Prohibition" had excluded the Rev. Wm. Robertson from the Seagate Chapel and had "obstinately persisted and officiated in the said Meeting-House every Lord's Day."

After proof was closed, the meeting adjourned till next forenoon :—

"And, that no soft Method might be omitted, or left untried, two of the Assistant Bishops had a meeting that evening with as many Agents of the Seagate Meeting-House."

The accounts of this meeting given on the one side in Bishop Raitt's pamphlet, and on the other in that of the Managers, are hopelessly at variance. The Bishop's account<sup>2</sup> runs as follows :—

"But they [*i.e.*, Bishops Falconar and Alexander] could bring them [*i.e.*, the Seagate Managers] to no Terms nor Temper, having found in a long Conversation with them little reason and no Principle but all Humour and inflexible personal Pique and Resentment, so that they [*i.e.*, the two Bishops] were clearer for inflicting the utmost Censure upon the Man, who had fed them up in these, than before."

And that of the Managers goes thus :—<sup>3</sup>

"The evening of the 31st of August, 1743, we had a meeting in the Coffee-House with Bishops Falconar and Alexander and, after mutual Compliments, the Bishops were pleased to tell us they were come from Bishop Raitt as Messengers of Peace between him and our Congregation. We assured them that they would find our Congregation most ready and willing to embrace the Offers of Peace."

Then followed a long Conversation, the upshot of which was that the prospects of reconciliation looked bright. The narrative continues thus :—

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 66.

“ We asked the Bishops to stay Supper ; but they could not, being engaged to Bishop Raitt. We called for a bottle of Wine, drank the two Bishops’ healths, then to Bishop Raitt’s, then Success to their blessed Undertaking and to Peace and Unity in the Church. We accompanied the two Prelates to Bishop Raitt’s door, begged that they would please give our most humble service to the Bishop, and so wished them a Good-Night.”

However, next morning, when the two Bishops had a second informal meeting with the Managers, things did not look so well :—

“ At nine, we two, in conjunction with one other Manager, went to the Place appointed, where we stayed above half-an-hour, then sent to let the two Bishops know we were waiting them and that Breakfast was ready. The two Prelates accordingly came and immediately after Breakfast we addressed them, hoping that Bishop Raitt had agreed with them in what passed last night. The Bishops without further arguing said :—‘ Bishop Raitt insists as a preliminary Article that ye should give up Mr. Fyffe altogether and call another, and that Mr. Fyffe should submit himself to his disposal.’ ”

Such are the two versions of the informal interviews. Perhaps after all they are not so contradictory as they look. The “sweet reasonableness” attributed to Bishops Alexander and Falconar by the Managers may be accounted for, if we suppose that they suggested a compromise, which should take the form of an ample apology to be tendered by Mr. Fyffe to Bishop Raitt, and a consequent licence for him to officiate in the Seagate Chapel, and we may further suppose that the two Bishops left the first meeting under the impression that they had succeeded in prevailing upon the Managers to accept this arrangement on behalf of Mr. Fyffe. But on the other hand “the inflexible personal Pique and Resentment” attributed by Bishop Raitt to the Managers in the transaction may be accounted for by the circumstance that, when the two mediating Prelates returned to Bishop Raitt, the latter discerned that the apparent yielding on the part of the Managers was fenced about with too many “ifs” and conditions. The utmost they had said was that “Mr. Fyffe as a good man and a Christian will do everything reasonable to procure Peace.” Now that was no real tender of an apology to the Bishop, and he would not accept it as such. Moreover in any case he was not going to be content with an apology from Mr. Fyffe. If in the forthcoming trial the accused were found guilty of the facts alleged, the Bishop would accept nothing less than a frank withdrawal from all further interference with the affairs of the Seagate Chapel.

The attempted compromise by Bishops Alexander and Falconar therefore failed.

The result was that, when the Synod reassembled a little later on that 1st of Sept., Mr. Fyffe was unanimously found guilty of Intrusion by the Bishop and Clergy. In the absence of the slightest acknowledgment by Mr. Fyffe himself of his fault in coming into the Diocese and officiating there against the express prohibition of the Diocesan, and in view of the fact that he flouted the Bishop's authority to the last moment by refusing to appear at the Synod, the two assessor Bishops were obliged to acquiesce, and Bishop Raitt concluded by reading the following sentence :—<sup>1</sup>

“ I, James Raitt, Bishop of the District of Brechin, Carse of Gowrie, etc. . . . Do with the Concurrence, Advice, and Consent of the said Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, by the Authority of our Lord Jesus Christ committed to me, *Depose, degrade, and deprive* the said Mr. David Fyffe of all Ecclesiastical Orders, both as Presbyter and Deacon, And pronounce him really and actually *Deposed, degraded, and reduced* to the Station of a Layman, now and in all Time coming, In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And all the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons said *Amen.*”

This Sentence was publicly intimated, not only throughout the District of Brechin, but also from all the Pulpits of the Dioceses of Dunkeld, Dunblane, and Aberdeen. Along with it was also read the Sentence of Deposition passed against the Rev. George Sempill by Bishop Rattray on July 8th, 1740, for an offence committed in Perth of the same character as that of which Mr. Fyffe had now been guilty.<sup>2</sup> This latter, however, was only read on the present occasion in Congregations wherein it had not formerly been published. Mr. Fyffe had himself proclaimed it<sup>3</sup> in 1740 !

The whole affair caused the most widespread controversy, not only within the Scottish Church, but also in Nonjuring circles in England. Especially was the matter taken up by Bishop George Smith. This Prelate was one of the eleven sons of John Smith, Prebendary of Durham, and had been born in 1693. He was educated at Westminster, Cambridge and Oxford, after which he became a student of the Inner Temple, but “ in 1715 his father died, leaving him a good fortune, and in 1717 he bought New Burn Hall, near Durham, where he resided as a country gentleman. He married his Cousin, Christian Bedford,” whose Sister was married to Bishop Gordon, the last of the regular line of the English Nonjurors. Mr. Smith was consecrated on S. Stephen's day, 1728, by English Anti-usager Prelates.<sup>4</sup> Canon Overton describes him as a man of excellent character and much

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of Mr. Sempill's Case, see my *Ep. Hist. Perth*, ch. xiv.

<sup>3</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> Overton, pp. 320-2.

learning, his writings as valuable, and his endeavour to heal the schism amongst the English Non-jurors praiseworthy. Judging by his present conduct in Scotland, we take him to have been one of those persons who, actuated by the best and kindest of motives, conceive it to be their mission to point out other people's mistakes to them, with a view to their amendment, and are honestly surprised when they find that their friendly efforts are not appreciated.

It would unduly swell the bulk of this volume were we to attempt to give an account of the correspondence which followed upon this Prelate's interference on behalf of Mr. Fyffe.<sup>1</sup> One result of his action, however, must be mentioned, both because it affected Bishop Alexander and also because it shews that Bishop Raitt (supported<sup>2</sup> as he was by Bishop White, and although he never transgressed the bounds of justice in the line which he took with regard to Mr. Fyffe) was the stiffest opponent on the Episcopal bench of mitigation of the offender's sentence. For after Bishop Smith in his letter of Oct. 9th, 1743, had advocated some such *via media* as Bishops Falconar and Alexander had originally suggested at Dundee, and out of deference to such a suggestion from a brother Bishop, the Primus and Bishop Alexander were willing to make a last forlorn hope on behalf of conciliation, Bishop Raitt would not hear of it. That, at least, is the account given by Bishop Smith, who says :—

“ Soon after Mr. Keith [*i.e.* the Primus] had received my letter, Mr. Alexander at his desire went to Dundee and told Mr. Raitt, what I advised ; *but Mr. Raitt would not listen to it*, although several of his friends there, as well as Mr. Alexander, endeavoured to persuade him.”

The result, therefore, of the English Prelate's first interference on behalf of Mr. Fyffe was that, although Bishops Keith and Alexander were willing to make an effort to secure the compromise which he suggested, yet they continued to feel that the offender ought to be punished and in view of the fact that he had not tendered a single word of apology to Bishop Raitt, who insisted on the retention of his sentence, they did not see their way to withdraw their formal support from the justly incensed Prelate.

As for Bishop Smith, it would have been more tactful on his part, inasmuch as he could put forward no claim to exercise jurisdiction in Scotland, to have been satisfied with the genuine effort at conciliation which his northern brethren had made in response to his suggestion. But, instead of doing so, he not only returned to the charge again and again, but passed before long from request to threatening, and at last went so far as to write

<sup>1</sup> See *Scotch V.*, pp. 200 to 234. *A True Narrative*, pp. 92 to 102 ; and *The Intrusion*, pp. 101, 104, 107, 110.

<sup>2</sup> *A True Narrative*, p. 97.

to Mr. Fyffe telling him that, as his own Bishops had failed to do him justice, he was prepared to do so. On Sept. 13th, 1744, he actually said<sup>1</sup> to Mr. Fyffe :—

“ We have all the reason in the World to receive you and yours under our Protection, and you may depend upon all the Assistance and encouragement I am capable of giving you.”

He also prays :—

“ That God would defend you from all Violence and Oppression and keep you under the shadow of His Wings until this Tyranny be overpast.”

That, of course, completely estranged the Scottish Bishops from the southern peace-maker !

Another champion of Mr. Fyffe's cause also arose in the person of our friend, the Rev. James Dundas<sup>2</sup> of Rossie and Longforgan, who published a pamphlet, entitled *An Impartial Enquiry*, in which he fell foul of the Usages and encouraged the people of the Seagate Chapel in their attitude of opposition to the Bishops of that Church of which they still professed to be members.

It remains to be added that, after Mr. Fyffe's deposition, a section of the Seagate congregation, which the Managers admit to have numbered from 30 to 50 communicants went over to Bishop Raitt's Chapel on the Yeaman Shore, and the rest of Mr. Fyffe's people, after trying to take up the position of a Scottish Anti-usage Congregation till the “ Forty-Five,” entirely transferred their allegiance in 1746, and called in an “ English Qualified ” Clergyman. It does not appear why they parted with Mr. Fyffe at that time. Writing two and a half years later (April 13th, 1749) to Bishop Alexander, the Rev. Robert Lyon speaks of *Da. Fyffe deceased*.

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion*, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> See Skinner's *Letter to Norman Sievwright* [1767] pp. 62 to 66 and 113.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### 1743.—*The Episcopal Synod and the Canons.*

In order to give a complete account of the preceding affair, in which Bishop Alexander was involved, we have been led on to a date later than that of the Synod, in which he first came officially in contact with it. We must return, therefore, at this point to the assembly in question, and consider the rest of the important work, in which our Prelate was called upon to share.

First there was the *Code of Canons*, which shall be the subject of this Chapter :—

And, in order to appreciate the ecclesiastical position, as it then stood in this connection, it will be necessary to give a backward glance at the fortunes (or rather the misfortunes) of the Church since its Disestablishment in 1689. That drastic change in its position had been brought about in such a high-handed and harsh manner that the entire ecclesiastical organisation had been simply pulverised. Such arrangements, as had held good previous to that cruelly inflicted blow, were utterly inapplicable to the impoverished and disorganised remnant, who, remaining loyal to the Bishops, were then driven out into the wilderness.

Here, we may observe by way of parenthesis, is to be found the chief cause of the grievous controversies, which distracted the fallen Church during the first half of the 18th century. It does, to be sure, seem as if the spirit of pugnacity was then more than usually on the alert; people believed in frontal attacks upon each other's positions as the proper method of solving controversies. But, after all, that was not the root cause of the frequent dissensions. Their origin is to be found in the fact just mentioned, namely, that at one and the same time every fundamental question of Church life was suddenly thrust upon them for practical solution, and also, not to mention that their means of livelihood were withdrawn, the whole external order of their Church, which ought to have provided the means of dealing with disputed points, was thrown into the melting pot. Every subject had to be settled *de novo*, and it was open to every one to dispute the authority of any one, who attempted to settle it!

But, whatever view we may take concerning the cause of the "Episcopal" dissensions of those days, certain it is that the Revolution deprived the Church of those laws, such as they were, upon which it had leaned as a State Establishment and laid upon it the task of building up anew a Code of Canons, applicable to its altered situation.

Previous to the holding of the Episcopal Synod, at which Bishop Alexander was consecrated, all that had been accomplished to meet the crying need had been done by the *Concordates* drawn up at the conferences of the "Usager" and "Anti-usager" Bishops in 1727 and 1731. At these a very few Canons had been framed almost exclusively relating to the Bishops themselves, providing for their election, consecration, jurisdiction, and the like. In 1731, it was enacted that the Metropolitan authority of the Bishop of Edinburgh, which had prevailed since the death of Archbishop Ross of S. Andrews in 1704,<sup>1</sup> should altogether lapse, and a Primus, with only the right of convocating and presiding over the formal meetings of the Bishops, should be elected by his brethren. It was also then agreed that "only the Scottish or English Liturgy should be used in the public Divine Service."<sup>2</sup>

This was the point at which our Episcopal Synod of Aug. 20th, 1743, took the matter up. The Bishops hoped that, since it was the first meeting of the kind to be held after the death of the last anti-usager belonging to their number, and the whole bench was now of one ecclesiastical complexion, some important progress might at last be made with the organization of the disestablished Church.

Accordingly in that letter to his brethren, which was read at the beginning of the Synod, the aged Bishop Dunbar recommended:—

"That ye establish such Canons as shall be found of greatest Concernment for the right Government and Peace of this Church, during the present Situation. Our worthy Primus, [*i.e.* Rattray], while we had the Happiness of his Presence with us, had the external State of this Church much at heart. The Canons he proposed are most worthy of our Regard."<sup>3</sup>

The Synod agreed to take the matter up:—

"Then Bishop Keith gave in a Copy of certain Canons, which had been drawn up by the late most learned and pious Bishop Rattray. Doubles whereof he himself had, in his lifetime, either delivered out of his own Hand, or transmitted to every one of the Bishops of this Church for their perusal against the Synod. Some other Canons were likewise presented, which had been formed by Bishops Dunbar, White, and Falconar, and, after they had been read over and maturely considered, it was unanimously resolved that Bishop Rattray's ten Canons shall be established. [Bishop Dunbar's were much to the same effect] with the addition of some other things selected from the rest."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T.S. Vol. III., p. 663.

<sup>2</sup> A few Regulations about the celebration of marriage were issued by the Bishops in 1733.

<sup>3</sup> D. R.

It will be sufficient here, instead of transcribing the whole of the Canons as passed, to reproduce the admirable summary of them, which appears in the Introduction to the Code of 1911 :—<sup>1</sup>

“In these [1743] Canons the principles embodied in the Agreement of 1731 in regard to the Consecration of Bishops and the office of Primus, were re-affirmed and emphasised. The majority of the Bishops were not only to choose a Primus ‘without respect either to seniority of Consecration or precedence of District,’ but they might override his action in the calling of meetings ; might, if he refused to call a meeting, when desired by them, meet and act synodically without him and might at pleasure depose him from the office of Primus.<sup>2</sup> If he laid claim to any metropolitical or vicarial power, or to any other power of any kind not granted by these Canons, he was to be suspended from all Episcopal jurisdiction, even within his own district, until he subscribed and handed in to the Bishops a renunciation of any such claim.

Regulations were laid down for the election of Bishops, the appointment of Deans, the Ordination and Institution of Presbyters, the care of vacant Episcopal districts, the placing under a Bishop’s Episcopal jurisdiction of his assistant Clergy and the members, if the Congregation, of which he was Minister was situated in the district of another Bishop ; the studies of the Clergy and of candidates for Holy Orders ; the admission of the Dean of every district as a representative of the Presbyters to sit in all Synodical meetings [*i.e.* of the Bishops] and to propose and reason in all matters of discipline and grievance of Presbyters, but not to give any decisive voice ; the acceptance of the votes of absent Bishops if tendered in writing ; the excommunication of schismatical Clergymen ; and the suspension of any Clergyman who married persons belonging to another Congregation without a certificate or recommendation from their proper Pastor. It was further enacted that, where the Bishops were equally divided in opinion ‘in Synod or out of Synod,’ that side of the question should carry, upon which the Primus gave his vote.”

In addition to these sixteen Canons :—

“The Bishops thought fit to subjoin the Declaration formerly made by them in the Synod holden at Edinburgh in the year 1738,<sup>3</sup> *viz.* :—That they do not arrogate to

<sup>1</sup> p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> How these enactments were the outcome of Bishop Freebairn’s claim to Metropolitical power and Bishop Rattray’s resistance thereto appears clearly in my *Public Life of Bishop Rattray*, for which see *The Scottish Standard Bearer* of 1912.

<sup>3</sup> At which Bishop Rattray superseded Bishop Freebairn as Primus.

themselves any temporal Right whatsoever, or that any Division or Regulation of Districts, which has been, or may be made by them, ought to subsist, when it shall please Almighty God in the course of His Providence to restore the Church to a legal Establishment ; nor do they hereby in the least intend to encroach upon the just Rights and Privileges competent to secular Powers in ecclesiastical affairs.”<sup>1</sup>

Certain recommendations were also agreed to, *viz.* :—A strong exhortation to the Clergy to use the Scottish Liturgy and, for Baptism and Marriage, the Book of Common Prayer ; to be careful about the proclamation of Banns, and to require Confirmation as a preliminary to admission to Holy Communion. Such was the important work done upon the Canons by this Synod.

<sup>1</sup> D. R.



## CHAPTER IX.

1743-4.—*The Episcopal Synod on the Diocese of Dunblane, etc.*

The foregoing work performed by the Episcopal Synod on the Code of Canons did not exhaust the list of their *Agenda*. They had also to provide for some re-arrangement of Diocesan jurisdiction and certain other items of business :—

(1) First, there was the *Primus-ship*. In his letter, Bishop Dunbar said :—

“ I make no doubt you will unanimously choose Bishop Keith Primus, to continue till the next Synodical Meeting, without any additional powers. He is on several accounts the fittest.”

Accordingly :—

“ The Bishops did unanimously elect Bishop Keith to be Primus, who thereupon thanked his Brethren for this Mark of their Regard, and promised to discharge his office with Honesty and according to their direction.”<sup>1</sup>

(2) On the third day of the Synod, Tuesday, Aug. 23rd, the affairs of the Diocese of Fife came up for consideration :—

“ Bishop Keith having taken Occasion to represent to the Synod his Inability to travel and to make Visitations through the frequent Infirmitys, with which he is afflicted, prayed the Consent of the Bishops to allow him to resign his District of Fife ; the Bishops being willing to gratify their said Brother in this Request, granted him allowance to make and intimate his Resignation to the Presbyters of that District how soon he shall think proper.”

The position, therefore, which he now occupied was that of Bishop of Orkney and Caithness and Primus. He was also Incumbent of the Barrenger's Close Congregation in Edinburgh, where he had his dwelling-house first in Paterson's Close in the Canongate, and later in Sandiland's Close.<sup>2</sup>

As for the vacancy thus created in Fife, Bishop White of Dunblane, as we have already seen, appeared to be the likely man. As early as Aug. 26th, 1742, we find the Rev. Robert Lyon of Crail, writing to Bishop Alexander :—

“ I shall be longing now to hear of White's being Bishop of Fife.”

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. letter in Lexcion.

The Bishops, therefore, having that already in their mind, the report of their Synod proceeds thus :—

“ And moreover it was resolved by the Synod that if Bishop White, who is at present Bishop of Dunblane, shall come to be elected into the District of Fife, the said Bishop White shall in that event be obliged to resign the District of Dunblane, whensoever he shall be required by a majority of the Bishops. And the said Bishop White did accordingly bind himself to make such resignation by a particular Deed subscribed by himself and the rest of the Bishops.”<sup>1</sup>

The result in the Diocese after the issue of the Mandate was as follows :—

“ On Oct. 16th, 1743, Bishop White was elected by the Clergy of Fife as successor to the Primus, Bishop Keith, in the superintendence of that District, and his Translation (was) agreed to by the Episcopal College.”<sup>2</sup>

(3) Accordingly the next question was that of the vacancy hereby created in Dunblane, for Bishop White, of course, kept his engagement with his brethren, and resigned that See.

In his Deed of Resignation,<sup>3</sup> he said :—

“ Whereas, upon the Right Rev. Bishop Keith’s Resignation of the District of Fife, the Rev. Presbyters thereof did, on the 21st of October last . . . unanimously make choice

<sup>1</sup> D.R.

<sup>2</sup> *Note*.—Since Fife, the Diocese to which Bishop White now went, has had such close connection in after times with Dunkeld and Dunblane, and its history yet remains to be written, the opportunity may be taken of giving the following particulars of the Bishop’s doings in his new sphere, derived from MSS. letters of the Rev. A. L. Livingstone of Dunfermline addressed to Bishop Alexander. The new Bishop lost no time in summoning a Diocesan Synod, upon which Mr. Livingstone remarks on Feb. 9th. 1744 :—“ I cannot but observe that the effects of our late Election begin to appear pretty early, at least as to attendance, and very probably this effect will be felt more sensibly afterwards.” On Feb. 27th he gives Bishop Alexander a long account of the Synod, which was held at Cupar. At that meeting, Bishop White appointed the Rev. R. Lindsay, Dean ; and the Presbyters elected the Rev. Mr. Young, Synod Clerk. The Assembly then dealt with the Edinburgh difficulty [see Chap. x.] giving strong support to the Bishops. Bishop White received orders for copies of Bishop Rattray’s *Liturgies* and appointed the next meeting for June 5th. Mr. Livingstone adds :—“ Our Bishop was extremely kind and civil, who gave us bed and board the two days we were together, and would not allow us, at least most of us, to go anywhere else.” Mr. Livingstone mentions another synodical meeting on Sept. 12th, at Cupar, and he adds that the Bishop wanted him to stay on at Cupar till the 18th, when he would return with him for a Confirmation at Dunfermline on the 19th. Altogether the Bishop gives us the impression, both in Dunblane and Fife, of an energetic Diocesan throwing himself into the work of rebuilding the walls of his fallen Zion. Alas, however, for the irony of things ! It was the year 1744 !

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Chest.* 419.

of me . . . to take the Inspection and Government of them and of that District, as proper Bishop thereof, and that I . . . on their intimating their Deed of Election to me . . . did so far comply with their Desire as to accept of this weighty Charge, provided that my Right Reverend Brethren, the Bishops, should approve and confirm this Deed of Election, I . . . hereby resign the District of Dunblane. This my Resignation (which I desire may be inserted in the Register of the Bishops of this Church and in that of the District of Dunblane) is written and subscribed with my Hand . . . on this 24th of January in in the year of our Lord 1744."

The subsequent fortunes of this document are not without interest. Bishop White made the following reference to it in a letter written to Bishop Alexander on June 15th, 1744 :—

" Mr. Graeme [Presbyter at Souterton in the Diocese, and evidently somewhat disaffected towards the Bishop] may be ignorant, but I sent my Resignation in form to Mr. Douglas [*i.e.* of Dunblane, the Dean] with a Desire that it might be inserted in their Register, by that same Post, with whom I sent it to K " [*i.e.* Primus Keith].

Whatever the reason may have been, and probably it was closely connected with the resignation of the Synod Clerkship by the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill, which came about owing to the ensuing disagreement between his clerical brethren and the Bishops, the fact remains, Bishop White's request was never complied with. All entries in the Minute-Book ceased with his departure.<sup>1</sup>

A very unsatisfactory state of affairs was now developed in the Diocese.

On the one hand, the Bishops strenuously exerted themselves to find a suitable nominee, whom they might suggest to the Electors.

As we have already seen (Chap. III.) Bishop White, while still only contemplating resignation in 1742, had sounded Mr. Alexander as to allowing himself to be named for the intended vacancy, but the Alloa Presbyter had firmly declined to fall in with the proposal, allèging that Dunblane was " too ticklish for him." The Rev. A. Gerard of Aberdeen was then approached towards the end of 1743, but on Jan. 7th, 1744, Bishop Alexander was obliged to write thus to Bishop Raitt :—

<sup>1</sup> The present writer, however, found the Bishop's Deed of Resignation, numbered 419 in the Catalogue of MSS. at Coates Hall, Edinburgh, and also the blank in the MS. Dunblane Register in Perth Cathedral Library and, with the concurrence of the present Bishop, at last copied the neglected document into the place where its writer wished it to be recorded !

“ Mr. Gerard had in the beginning of the year most peremptorily refused to be concerned with Dunblane.”

Whereupon Mr. Alexander, after his consecration to Dunkeld, felt that it was incumbent upon him to render some help in the difficulty, and suggested the Rev. Robert Douglas at Dunblane. Perhaps he thought that, where there was so much acute difference of opinion, an old man practically laid aside from work was the safest and quietest appointment that could be made. The proposal, however, elicited the following response from the staunchest supporter of the Bishops in the Diocese, the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill. Writing on March 13th, 1744, to Bishop Alexander, that Presbyter says :—

“ For what end, Sir, do you propose to assume our Dean into your Number ? He can neither meet with you, nor write to you, and, honest man, he can do nothing to us, except give us his Blessing, when we go to see him, and that he may do without your having the Trouble to come to Dunblane for his Consecration : we shall take it from him, as he is. His Antiquity is warrant enough for that ! ”

Yet another effort was now made by the Bishops to find a suitable man. The Rev. A. Gerard was again approached. After that Presbyter's first refusal, Bishop Alexander goes on to say :—

“ The affair lay over till the month of April [when] Bishop White wrote me he had prevailed with him [*i.e.* Gerard] to alter his resolution, and urged me to forward it again as much as possible ; accordingly, as he [*i.e.* Bishop White] had told me he had wrote Messrs. Douglas, Bell, & Erskine, I took the first opportunity of writing to Mr. Graeme, of whom I had hopes [*i.e.* that he would favour Mr. Gerard's election] from a former Conversation. He gave me a general but very civil Return That he had not yet been apprized of the Vacancy [!] nor had any Mandate been issued, but so soon as these things were done, he would be very ready to concur with his Brethren in any proper Person.”

Writing to Bishop Alexander from Stretton in Bedfordshire (where he was now Chaplain to Mr. Bowdler) the Rev. Robert Lyon on May 8th, 1744, says :—

“ My chief attention is now upon G[erard]'s affair. K[ith] told me that C[onacher], G[raeme], and even Duglass were like to turn restive and W[hite] wrote me at length and shews great anxiety ; with some diffidence, he says, if this fails, he fears R[ait]. And, indeed, if it fail, I fear it will be very unlucky for you all ; but, as I wish, so I hope the best.”

Upon the whole it appears that the foregoing allusion made by Bishop White to Bishop Raitt means that the successive proposals on the part of the Bishops to find a nominee were prompted by a desire to secure a Diocesan for Dunblane, who should not introduce an inharmonious element into the lately united Episcopate and more particularly that they dreaded lest Bishop Raitt might take the warpath, if any one, who had at all sympathised with the Rev. David Fyfe, were elected. All their efforts having failed, however, they at last felt constrained to issue a Mandate<sup>1</sup> and let the Election go as it might.

On their side the Electors soon showed their hand, for on Aug. 29th, the Dean (Douglas) and the Rev. John Conacher, the latter of whom was now Synod Clerk, wrote a letter to the Primus informing him that they had elected the Rev. Thomas Ogilvy of Kinnalie, Presbyter at Brechin. Now, although Mr. Ogilvy had been one of the deputation which went at Bishop Raitt's request, to warn Mr. Fyffe not to come to Dundee,<sup>2</sup> yet the fact that he absented himself from the Synod<sup>3</sup> at which Mr. Fyffe was condemned, is significant of his general bias. Mr. Ogilvy, therefore, as sympathising with the Anti-usager side<sup>4</sup> in general, and in particular with one of that party, who had defied the whole bench of Bishops, was not a *persona grata* to the Right Reverend Fathers, and least of all to the warlike Bishop Raitt. Eager, therefore, to avoid the introduction of a discordant element into the Episcopal College, the harmony of which had only recently been secured at much cost, the Primus availed himself of a slight formal irregularity in the manner in which Mr. Ogilvy's name had been returned to him, and, on behalf of his brethren, refused to ratify the election.

At the next meeting of the Presbyters, however, Mr. Ogilvy was again returned by four to one, Messrs. Douglas, Blair, Conacher, and Graeme voting for him, and Mr. Erskine against. The result was at once correctly communicated to the Primus by the Dean. The latter, however, declaring that the Bishops had made it a rule not to consecrate any prelate-elect for whom less than five votes had been recorded, again refused to confirm the election. Hereupon, "almost all the gentlemen of the District" signed each his own Congregational petition to the Bishops in favour of Mr. Ogilvy, and an imposing array of names it was.

Bishop Alexander, indeed, was inclined to yield, as appears from the following words which he wrote to Dean Seton of Forfar on Feb. 2nd, 1744-5:—

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Chest.* 420.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion* p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Ochterlonie had tried to persuade Bishop Freebairn to consecrate Mr. Ogilvy in 1737, but Bishop Freebairn refused to proceed without a third Consecrator. T.S. 276.

“ The Election of Mr. Ogilvie for Dunblane is now turned serious upon us, the Clergie, *i.e.* the Majority of them and gentry having combined to support it, so that, could we be satisfied as to his Principles (for I think his moral Character has not been objected to) and have proper Assurances of his living in a brotherly way with us, it would be advisable in our present State to assume him into our number and not disoblige so numerous and powerful a Party.

Now, as severals of you live in his Neighbourhood and are personally acquainted with him and his Conversation, I would have you be so good as honestly and ingenuously to tell me your opinions, especially whether there be good ground for what I have heard among you, and what indeed sticks with me, as to his Calvinistic notions and training up his youth in the Westminster Catechism, or whether it would be proper to put Questions to himself for Satisfaction on these points.”

What may have been the reply to this letter does not remain recorded, but it is certain that the Bishops, some of them determined not to consecrate a man, who had leanings towards the Rev. David Fyfe, and others, swayed by the desire to prevent the revival of a split in their body through probable disagreements between Bishop Raitt and the Bishop-elect, continued obdurate against the consecration of Mr. Ogilvy, and the See remained unfilled.

In accordance therefore with the seventh of the new Canons, the unwelcome upshot for Bishop Alexander was that he himself who had but recently declined the task as being “ too ticklish for him,” was now obliged, as the Bishop having his residence nearest to Dunblane, to undertake the administration of the vacant Diocese !

This added seven Clergy to the sixteen already under his care, thus making him preside over twenty-three in all, and, although six of these additional Presbyters have already been mentioned, it will be well at this point to give some notice of each of them, gathering our information chiefly from the MS. *Dunblane Register* of 1735-1743, and in a lesser degree from various MSS. :—

(1) First, there was the *Rev. Robert Douglas*, Presbyter at *Dunblane*. Of his life as a private individual we know nothing, except that he was already aged and infirm. Neither have we any information as regards his pastoral work at Dunblane. But of his acts as Dean, the following notices survive. He presided over the meeting of the Diocesan Clergy, which assembled at Dunblane on March 18th, 1735, at which it was agreed to petition the Bishops to choose and consecrate a Bishop in succession to Bishop Gillan, who had died on Jan. 3rd. On July 8th of the

same year he presided over another synodical meeting, at which he read two letters—one from Bishop Keith, announcing that the Bishops had chosen and consecrated the Rev. Robert White, of whom we have already seen a good deal, and another from Bishop Freebairn, the Primus, protesting (for reasons which have been already explained) against the step thus taken. He presided again on Sept. 4th, at the Diocesan Synod, at which Bishop White made his entry and was acknowledged as Bishop of the Diocese by the meeting. On Sep. 10th, the position which he occupied was acknowledged by a letter from Bishop White, constituting him Moderator. Accordingly he presided again over a meeting held on Feb. 15th, 1736, at which two Presbyters, *i.e.* the Rev. John Graeme of Souterton [near Duncrub] who had hesitated; and the Rev. William Lauder, who was old and infirm, sent in their adhesion to the Bishop. He presided again on Aug. 25th, 1737, on which occasion it was reported that Dunning was vacant; again on July 18th, 1738, when it was reported that Dunning was filled up; again on Oct. 7th and 8th, 1738, when the Narrative and Acts of the Episcopal Synod recently held at Edinburgh for the purpose of receiving Bishop White into that Right Reverend body, were read; again on Oct. 9th, 1739, when certain Diocesan details were arranged; again on Sept. 10th, 1740, when amongst other things, the Bishop appointed a fast owing to “the late shaking winds and rotting rains” and once more, on Feb. 12th, 1741, when Mr. George Innes, Tutor at Balgowan, was examined for Deacon’s Orders, and the Bishop appointed a thanksgiving for the plentiful harvest. The Dean’s signature also attests the record in the Diocesan Minutes of the report of the Episcopal Synod of 1743 there copied out. It has already been related how he fared in the latter year after the resignation of Bishop White, which took place on Jan. 24th, 1744.

(2) Secondly, there was the *Rev. John Graeme at Souterton*, near Auchterarder. This Presbyter was evidently not very eager to support Bishop White, and from that it is to be presumed that his sympathies inclined to the Anti-usager principles, of which the Rev. David Fyffe was so indiscreet a champion. At all events he absented himself from the meeting of July 8th, 1735, at which Bishop Keith’s letter announcing the choice and consecration of Mr. White as Bishop of Dunblane was read. Still, it had been he who, on March 18th, 1735, along with a colleague, had been selected by the Synod to draw up the petition to the Episcopal College, requesting that Right Reverend body to choose and consecrate a Bishop; and later, on Feb. 16th, 1736—

“Mr. Graeme, having got over some difficulty relating to his Submission to the Bishop of this District, and having given and subscribed canonical Obedience to him, is to continue in Amity with his Brethren of this District, agreeable to his Obligation to his Ordinary.”

He was present, too, at the Diocesan Synods of Aug. 25th, 1737; July 8th, 1738; Oct. 9th, 1739; Sept. 10th, 1740; Feb. 12th, 1741; and in their Synod at Edinburgh in 1738, after hearing the Bishops of Dunkeld and Dunblane (*i.e.* Rattray and White) the Bishops agreed to recognise Mr. Graeme as being in the Diocese of Dunblane and not in that of Dunkeld, though his residence was in Bishop Rattray's District, on the ground that the bulk of his people lived in that of Bishop White. All the same it is rather suggestive of a recrudescence of his scruples concerning Bishop White to find that he sent an excuse for absenting himself from the Diocesan Synod of Nov. 7th and 8th, 1738, at which the account of his Diocesan being received into the Episcopal Synod, despite the protests of Bishops Freebairn and Ochterlonie, was read. We have already seen that after Bishop White's resignation, although he gave Bishop Alexander fair words when that Prelate asked him to support the election of a successor acceptable to the Bishops, he stoutly voted for Mr. Ogilvy, their *bête noir*!

(3) Thirdly, there was the *Rev. William Bell at Doune*. This Presbyterian was in charge of the Congregation in that Perthshire village during the whole time, *i.e.* 1735-1743, covered by the *Dunblane Register*. When was he appointed? The charge had become vacant by the resignation of Rev. Walter Stewart in Oct., 1728.<sup>1</sup> Upon a MS. sermon in the Theological College, Edinburgh, bearing Mr. Bell's name, there is a statement written to the effect that it was preached at the writer's "Trials" on Aug. 19th, 1730, and "Very well liked, Blessed be God." The text is 1 S. Pet. iii. 12:—*For the eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*. The same Sermon was preached "at Down, Sept. 6th" of the same year. From this it is plain that Mr. Bell was ordained and instituted to the charge, as Mr. Stewart's successor, in the latter part of Aug., 1730. He was accordingly present at all the Synodical meetings which have been mentioned as being held under the chairmanship of Dean Douglas, and it was he who was commissioned by his brethren to draw up the letter sent to Bishop Keith on July 8th, 1735. We have seen that after the resignation of Bishop White, he was one of those who voted for Mr. Ogilvy, and from that we conclude that his sympathies were on the Anti-usager side.

(4) Fourthly, there was the *Rev. John Connachar at Gartmore*, which lies about two miles south of Aberfoyle, in Stirlingshire. He was present at all the Synodical meetings just mentioned. On that of Aug. 25th, 1737,

"Mr. Bell and Mr. Connachar represented to the Bishop and Synod the discouraging Situation of the latter from deficiencies in the payment of his Stipend. . . . The Bishop determined to have application made to the Managers

<sup>1</sup> *Facts and Fancies*, pp. 71-72.

of the Fund for the Episcopal Clergy for assistance from them to continue Mr. Connachar amongst those well-disposed People."

In the meetings of Nov. 8th, 1738, and Sept. 20th, 1740, our Presbyter was censured for "marrying two persons not in Communion of the Church, nor having proclamation of Banns," and to that censure he submitted. In view of the previous entry concerning the uncertainty of his stipend, could it be that it was the prospect of a substantial fee which had led him to commit the irregularity? At the meeting of Sept. 20th, 1740, Mr. Connachar himself successfully referred to the Synod a disciplinary case against one of his laymen. As we have already seen, he voted for Mr. Ogilvy, and we therefore conclude that his sympathies were with the Anti-usager tradition. In 1741 he received a grant of 8 crowns from the Charity fund at Edinburgh.<sup>1</sup> We shall hear a good deal more about this bold and warlike champion of the Church!

(5) Fifthly, there was the *Rev. William Erskyne at Muthill*. This Presbyter<sup>2</sup> was born in 1709,<sup>3</sup> and succeeded the Rev. James Inglis in the charge in 1732. On March 10th, 1733, he received a long letter from Robert Forbes, afterwards Bishop of Ross, Caithness and Argyle, from the tenor of which it is natural to infer that he was ordained Priest shortly after coming to Muthill. Its opening sentences are as follows:—<sup>4</sup>

"D[ear] C[omrade], Tho' in a former letter I declined the giving you Advice concerning your Entering into Holy Orders, yet at last I have prevailed with myself to send you the following Thoughts, which consist of a short Account of the Nature of that Venerable Office and the Qualifications requisite in those, who stand Candidates for the same, with a Reflection or two upon the fatal Consequences, too visible to be denied, which have taken their Rise from a wrong Choice of them."

He was present at all the Synodical meetings above mentioned, except that of Nov. 7th and 8th, 1738, to which he sent an excuse. He was in fact Synod Clerk, an appointment which, no doubt, he partly owed to his handwriting, which is beautiful; and partly, we should like to think, to personal confidence reposed in him by his brethren. In Jan. 1736, he copied out some important proposals made by Bishop Dunbar of Aberdeen, which were intended to build a bridge between Bishops Rattray and Keith on the "Usager" side and Bishops Freebairn and Ochterlonie on the other.<sup>5</sup> In the Minutes of the Diocesan Synod of Oct. 9th, 1739, there is indeed no mention of a motion brought forward

<sup>1</sup> C.'s *Argyle*, p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> See page 14.

<sup>3</sup> Inscription in S. James's Church, Muthill.

<sup>4</sup> C.'s *Bishop F.*, p. 349.

<sup>5</sup> Cr. MSS.

by him, but one of the *Cruickshank MSS.* consists of the copy of a resolution moved by him to the effect that the Prayer Book Offices should be made compulsory at Baptisms and Marriages. The moving of such a motion by him is evidence, so far as it goes, that his sympathies were on the side of the Usager tradition, and at the same time that there was an Anti-usager bias somewhere in the Diocese towards adhering to the custom of *extempore* forms for the celebration of the occasional offices. On Sept. 21st, 1740, Mr. Erskine read a notice in his Church intimating that Friday, Sept. 26th, would be set apart, in obedience to the direction of the Bishop, as a day of Fasting and Humiliation.<sup>1</sup> In the years 1732-1743, inclusive, there were no fewer than 378 Baptisms administered in the Muthil congregation, giving an average of over 31 a year. Mr. Erskine was himself a married man. As we have seen, he was the solitary Presbyter in Dunblane who voted against Mr. Ogilvy as Bishop White's successor, which is another proof of his "Usager" sympathies. Finding himself out of harmony with his brethren in this affair, he resigned the Synod Clerkship, and thereupon no further entries were made in the *Dunblane Register*.

(6) Sixthly, there was the *Rev. James Lauder at Muthill*. This divine had been ordained to the Priesthood on July 17th, 1713, by Robert Douglas, Bishop of Dunblane, "juxta morem et ritus Ecclesiae Britannicae Orthodoxae." The MS. parchment, signed by the Bishop, of whose episcopal seal only the merest fragment now remains, informs us that Mr. Lauder was "in artibus liberalibus Magistrum"; "in vitâ suâ laudabilis," and "morum ac virtutum donis nobis multipliciter commendatum." On March 16, 1716, "Mr. James Lauder, Episcopal Preacher," was committed a prisoner to Perth Tolbooth by Major General Sabin for having sided with Prince James (*Perth City Records*). At the present time, however, he was living in retirement at Muthill, holding probably the Bishop's general licence to officiate, but unable to attend the meetings of the Synod. He appears to have been ready to give Mr. Erskine occasional assistance, and the following entry accordingly occurs in the local *Register* of Baptisms:—<sup>2</sup>

"Dec. 1, 1734, By Mr. Lauder, Mary [lawful] daughter to Duncan M'Whannel and Mary M'Craw in Craigneich, born Dec. 1st."

On the advent of Bishop White to the Diocese, he wrote on Feb. 15th, 1736, that:—

"He had all imaginable Inclination to yield a ready Obedience to any Commands of our Right Rev. Ordinary, for whom

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. A. C. Hallen in his Introduction to the *Muthill Register* regrets that he has no knowledge of Mr. Lauder, p. x.

he had the highest Regard, yet that his advanced Age and manifold Infirmitys would not permit him to make a Journey, though ever so inviting."

Mr. Erskine was appointed to tell Mr. Lauder that the Praeses [*i.e.* Dean Douglas] had received his letter, and was very sorry to hear of his Indisposition.<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that Mr. Lauder took no part in the election of a successor to Bishop White in 1743. That might be owing to his not being instituted to a charge. Two circumstances, however, incline us to suppose that his sympathies were with the Usagers—*i.e.* first, because he had elected to spend his retired life in the only congregation in the Diocese presided over by a Usager; and, secondly, because, if he had been an Anti-usager, the four electors of Mr. Ogilvy might have non-plussed Primus Keith, when the latter refused the Bishop-elect on the ground that fewer than five electors had returned him, by contriving that Mr. Lauder's vote should be added to theirs, but they did not.

(7) Seventhly, there was the *Rev. David Lindsay at Dunning*. At the Diocesan Synod of Aug. 25th, 1737, the Bishop consulted his Clergy as to what was best to do about the vacancy at Dunning. On July 18th, of the following year the business before the meeting included "the inrolling amongst the Presbyters of this District, the Rev. Robert Lindsay, now Presbyter at Dunning, and he is accordingly inrolled and took his place as a member of Synod." After that, he attended the meetings regularly. On Oct. 9th, 1739, his application to the effect that the people of Auchterarder and Dunning and on the south side of the Earn should be recognized as his, and that without his leave they should not frequent ministrations of the Rev. John Graeme of Souterton, was granted. As we have seen, along with Messrs. Douglas, Connachar, and Bell, he voted for Mr. Ogilvy in 1743.

Such were the Clergy of the second Diocese, to which the new Canon required our Bishop to supply Episcopal offices. The foregoing review shews why it was that he originally thought the oversight of the District "too ticklish for him." At least four out of six of the Clergy had Anti-usager sympathies, and, although as a matter of fact, they had all hitherto acted in an orderly way, a Bishop who inherited the Usager traditions might be excused if he apprehended the possible emergence of another George Sempill, or David Fyffe, from such a Diocese. However, the ruling of Providence now required him to undertake the charge, and henceforth he acted as Bishop of Dunkeld and Dunblane.

Unfortunate, indeed, was it for the Scottish Church that in the year 1744, when the march of events was about to make tremendous claims upon the loyalty of the faithful remnant,

<sup>1</sup> I take the Mr. Lauder of Aug. 7, 1739, in the M.R. to be a different person.

the state of this important District should have been such as we have seen it to be ! But it was much better than that of Edinburgh !

The last items of business dealt with by this memorable Synod were of a much less difficult kind :—

(a) The first resulted in a pleasant commission being entrusted to our Bishop :—

“ *Tuesday, Aug. 23.*—After the Synod was constituted by Prayer, it was moved that, whereas it had been recommended to the deceased Bishop Rattray in the Synod begun and holden in Edinburgh, July 11th, 1738, to draw up some further Catechetical Instructions than are contained in the Liturgy, for the Use of adult Persons, that come to be confirmed, And this present Synod, understanding that the said Bishop Rattray, now with God, did in his life-time make some Progress in this matter, The Bishops do now recommend to Bishop Alexander to endeavour to procure a Copy of the said Instructions<sup>1</sup> from Mr. Rattray of Craighall, eldest Son to the Bishop, if any such were actually made.—”

(b) It is plain that this commission was laid upon Bishop Alexander on account of his being Bishop Rattray's successor in the See of Dunkeld. It is equally plain that the two following were suitable to be discharged by Bishop Keith, both in his capacity as Primus, and also in that of a learned Church historian :—

“ The Synod, being desirous to preserve and pay all due Regard to the Regulations, Forms, and Monuments of this Episcopal Church of Scotland, which have been at any time made and used by their Predecessors, the Bishops thereof ; earnestly recommend to Bishop Keith to search for a Copy of the Book entituled ‘ The Form and Manner of ordaining Ministers and consecrating of Arch-bishops and Bishops used in the Church and printed at Edinburgh in the year 1620 by Thomas Finlayson, his Majesty's Printer with Licence.’<sup>2</sup> And that the said Bishop Keith take pains to adapt this Book to a Liturgical Form, against the next Consecration that shall happen to be in this Church, and that in this Performance he shall have especial Regard to the Monuments of remotest Antiquity, and that he transmit copies of it, when finished, to the several Bishops of this Church for their perusal against the next Synod.”

<sup>1</sup> *Instructions Concerning the Christian Covenant* “ published in London after his death,” and reprinted by Rev. G. H. Forbes at the Pitsligo Press. Burntisland, 1854.

<sup>2</sup> It is reprinted on pp. 111 to 131 of *Scottish Liturgies of James VI.*, by Rev. G. W. Sprott, D.D. Blackwood, MCMI.

The Primus's second commission was also of an interesting and important character :—

“ Then Bishop Keith, having presented a List of MSS. relating to this Church, which were delivered by the late Bishop Rose of Edinburgh his Lady to the late Bishop Fullarton of Edinburgh, and for which the last named Bishop gave a receipt to Bishop Rose's Lady, dated Sept. 19th, 1720, Therefore Charge was given to Bishop Keith to enquire after and, if possible, recover the said MSS. out of the hands of the Heirs, etc., of the late Bishop Fullarton, and to report his diligence to the next Synod.

Here follows a List of the MSS. :—1. A Book of the Synods of Edinburgh ; 2. Some Transactions of the College of Bishops ; 3. Presbytery Book of Mearns ; 4. Register Book of the Bishops, 5 Vols. ; 5. Presbytery Book of Forfar ; 6. Presbytery Book of Aberbrothock, 2 Vols. ; 7. Register of the provincial Assembly of Fyfe, 5 Vols. ; 8. Session Book of Inverkip, 2 Vols. ; 9. Register of the Baptisms of Inverkip from 1665 to 1680 ; 10. Provincial Book of Argyle ; 11. Presbytery Book of Dunfermline ; 12. Provincial Assembly Book of Glasgow and Air, 2 Vols. ; 13. Rental of the Bishoprick of Edinburgh.”

After writing a respectful letter to the aged Bishop Dunbar in reply to that, which he had addressed to the Synod :—

“ The Bishops, finding no other business to come before this Synodical Meeting, agreed that it shall forthwith be dissolved.”



## CHAPTER X.

1744.—(1) *Revolt of the Edinburgh Clergy*; (2) *Loyalty of the rest of the Church*; and (3) *The Position of the Bishops*.

The death of Bishop Rattray just before the meeting of the Episcopal Synod had been a very serious loss to the Church at a critical time and the occurrence of the Affair of David Fyffe most unfortunate, but otherwise (Bishop Alexander assures us<sup>1</sup>) the Bishops left their place of Assembly congratulating themselves that they had accomplished an important and satisfactory work. For this was the first Synod since the death of Bishop Rose in 1720, in which they had been able to give their minds, not to the composition of serious differences within their own Order, but unitedly to the consideration of the needs of the Church as a whole. As the result, we have seen, they had substituted a set of Canons, upon which they unanimously agreed, in the place of the *Concordate* of 1731, which had been a compromise between two rival parties in the College; they had also provided for the present Episcopal supervision of the dioceses; and, last, but not least, they had, for the first time and with the intention of peace-makers, given the Presbyters the right to sit in Synod with them, by providing that the Deans should be summoned to the meetings, not indeed with the power of voting, but yet with that of speaking.

### I.

Alas, however, short time was left them for self-congratulation! For no sooner did their Canons become known than they were used as the occasion of a very serious revolt on the part of the Edinburgh Clergy.<sup>2</sup> These Presbyters having been without a Diocesan since the death of Bishop Freebairn on Christmas Eve, 1739, had indeed met in Feb. 1743, and elected Bishop Rattray, and he had "returned an obliging answer," intending to consult with them on the matter when he came to Edinburgh,<sup>3</sup> but his sudden death brought the matter to an abrupt conclusion. Hereupon, before making any further attempt to obtain a Bishop, and observing that the Collegian Anti-usager party had been deprived of any representatives on the Episcopal bench, they constituted themselves the surviving champions of that "low" Churchmanship, which in a vain effort to conciliate the Presbyterian extremists, had been adopted during the last established

<sup>1</sup> See end of his address to his own Synod in II. of this Chapter.

<sup>2</sup> *Lawson* pp. 269-286.

<sup>3</sup> *Lawson* p. 536.

period, and, magnifying their own importance from that point of view, now held a meeting for the purpose of considering the latest step which had been taken by their Fathers in Christ.

Two allusions to this meeting are forthcoming from contemporary correspondence.

Writing to our Bishop on Jan. 10th, 1744, the Rev. Ninian Niving of Torbrex, near Stirling, said :—

“ Mr. Harper [Presbyter at Bothkennar in the Diocese of Edinburgh], I hear, is to make one at the Synod. . . . Things have taken a different turn: where they will end 'tis past my skill to conjecture. God Almighty pity us, we seem to be a poor, infatuated people, doomed to destruction, but I trust in His Goodness.”

And on Jan. 17th, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote to Bishop Alexander as follows :—

“ I'll be most fond to know the result of that Affair 'twixt the Primus and the Edinburgh Presbyters.”

Mr. Niving's evil forebodings were only too well grounded, for the upshot of the meeting was that the brethren declared war upon the Bishops on Jan. 17th, 1744. This they did by the presentation of a protest, signed by seventeen of their number, in which the proceedings of the late Episcopal Synod were criticized and repudiated in a determined and not very respectful manner. The Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill alluded to their action in a letter to Bishop Alexander, dated Feb. 8th, in which he said :—

“ I received yours acquainting me of the Conduct of the Edinburgh Lads in their Address to you Bishops; they are strange folks, just like the Presbyterians with the Government, always upon the catch, when they find you embarrassed to insist upon some concession from you. . . . Bell says . . . that A. Robertson presented their Address to you with indiscreet expressions.”

The Protestation is too long to be reproduced here in full, but we make the following necessary quotations from it.

To begin with the occasion out of which the writing of it arose :—

“ Being convened here in virtue of a Letter from our Reverend and much respected Brother, Mr. Thomas Auchinleck, now the Senior Presbyter in Edinburgh, there was read to us a Letter of Dec. 5th [1743] directed to him by the Right Rev. Bishop Keith, importing that your Reverences had lately held a Synod, wherein you had established several Canons, relating to the several Dioceses, or (as you are pleased to call them) Districts of the Church, whether full or vacant, and particularly one relating to this Diocese

(or District) of Edinburgh, whereby your Primus is appointed to write to the Senior Presbyter to convocate us for choosing a Dean, who is to represent us in all Synodical meetings, by sitting with your Reverences to propose and reason in all Matters of Discipline and grievance of Presbyters, but not to give any decisive voice."

In opposition to this their view was that the late Synod was null and void *ab initio* :—

" It appears to us (from our Historys, from our Records, from the Laws<sup>1</sup> of the Kingdom establishing Episcopacy, from the writings of some of our Brethren yet living, who saw the Church in Vigour and were eye-witnesses of her good Order and Government) that, by the Constitution<sup>2</sup> of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, the Presbyters did sit in Synods and Church Assemblys with their Bishops, not barely to hear and to propose, to reason and represent, but that they had authoritative voices and voted decisively in whatever question came before them. That not only the Deans and other Dignitaries of each Diocese came to these Assemblys in their own Right, but that the rural Clergy were duly represented there by some of their own number chosen by themselves and sent thither on purpose, whose votes were numbered with the rest, and in short that the powers of Legislation and Discipline were not then thought to have been lodged with the Bishops alone, without the Advice and Concurrence of the Clergy."

" The Constitution of our Church<sup>3</sup> thus appearing to us to be regular and right and well founded, we humbly conceive that we are obliged in Conscience . . . earnestly to beg you would stop all further Innovation of any Sort and particularly all Encroachments upon the Rights and Privileges of our Second Order."

Having thus repudiated the authority of the Episcopal Synod, they go on :—

" It is with Reluctancy we must now descend to an Examination of Particulars, which we find no less liable to exception than they are in the gross and on Account of the stinted Authority, of which they stand enacted."

Here follow three of the most important " Particulars," to which they object :—

<sup>1</sup> Their reference is to the Act of the First Parliament of Charles II., T. S. 301.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, so far as a General Assembly was concerned, the *theoretical* Constitution, not put into practice. Diocesan Synods were not legislative.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* In its Established period, 1662-1689.

(1) “Your ninth Canon is :—That, seeing in the present distressed state of the Church, it may happen that a Bishop may have his Dwelling and Place for public Worship within the District of another Bishop, in that case those, who belong to his Congregation together with the Presbyters and Deacons joined with him . . . shall be as much under his Jurisdiction as if they were within the Bounds of his own District, and shall be exempt from the Jurisdiction of that Bishop within the Bounds of whose District they are.”

To that they object :—

“This Canon seems chiefly intended for serving a particular Purpose in the City of Edinburgh, where, if it should take effect, our Bishop (when God shall bless us with one<sup>1</sup>) would be rob’d of a great Part of his Flock and a considerable Number of his Clergy and all the Refugees from his Discipline would take shelter under the Patronage of the exempt Bishop.”

(2) They also object strongly to the third Canon, by which it was provided that no Bishop should claim Metropolitcal power: they say :—

“We would have taken no notice of this, if your third Canon were not intended to give a secret Blow to the Rights and Privileges of the See of Edinburgh, whereof we humbly think ourselves guardians during the Vacancy.”

(3) Lastly, they objected to the fourth, fifth, and seventh Canons, by which it was provided that no Election was to take place in a vacant Diocese without a Mandate from the Primus. They say :—

“We might *then*<sup>2</sup> meet and elect a Bishop without waiting for leave from the Metropolitan, but now we must not without a Mandate from your temporary Primus. The semblance of Power still left us to choose our Bishop is made void and illusory, while your Reverences have reserved to yourselves a Faculty of rejecting our Elect, without giving a Reason, only telling us ye have Reasons, which satisfy yourselves.”

Before concluding, they remark :—

“We hope your Reverences will not think us Presbyterians for affirming the just Rights of the Second Order. Some of the greatest Men our Island has produced were of the

<sup>1</sup> The See had been vacant since the death of Bishop Freebairn, Dec. 24, 1739, though offered to Rattray in 1743.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion seems to be to the period 1723-1731.

same Sentiments and the best of our Kings (who died a Martyr for the Church) came to find (too late) that a Moderate Episcopacy was the best."

But even worse was to follow. On Aug. 15th, 1744, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote to Bishop Alexander:—

"I'm truly sorry to hear of that new flame that's broken out in the Church by means of that unhappy English Prelate."

The fact was that Bishop Smith accompanied his patronage of the Rev. David Fyffe<sup>1</sup> with similar conduct towards the Edinburgh revolvers and began by sending the most voluminous communications<sup>2</sup> in their defence to Bishop Keith. It will be impossible to notice all of his points and arguments here, as they would very greatly swell the bulk of the present volume, but two if them we may mention:—

(1) First, he had a double objection to the Authority of the late Synod. To begin with:—<sup>3</sup>

"I find by looking into the Account (of your Constitution<sup>4</sup>) given us by the Church Historians of both Nations, that the Indiction of all National Synods of your Church belong to His Majesty by the prerogatives of his Crown, and all Convocations of that kind without his Licence are merely unlawful."

But not only (he said) had the Bishops met without the Prince's sanction, but also the constitution of their meeting was obviously different from those required in the late happy Establishment in Church and State:—

"Mr. Collier<sup>5</sup> on p. 892 gives us the Act of your Parliament for the Establishment of a National Synod, by which it was enacted that it, for the lawful members thereof, shall consist of the Archbishops, Bishops and Deans, of Archdeacons, Moderators of Meetings for exercise, and of one Presbyter of each Meeting, etc."

(2) Secondly, he took exception to the Bishop's recommendation in favour of the use of the Scottish Liturgy. He did not object to the Office in itself, but he imagined that the Bishops were intending to suppress the English Service in its favour, and to that he strongly objected:—

<sup>1</sup>For which see ch. vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich V.*, pp. 200-225.

<sup>3</sup> *Scot.* 202.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* As granted by the Crown in the days of their Establishment, 1662-1689.

<sup>5</sup> *Scot.* 203.

“ Bishop Alexander<sup>1</sup> is displeased with me in supposing there was a design of extirpating our Office ; but certainly to take away its establishment, which was the *Concordate*, looks extremely like such a design. . . Unless, therefore, the first Article of the Agreement be restored, we must believe the extirpation of it was in view.”

Having thus explained this English Prelate's point of view, we may proceed to give evidence of the practical line, which he proposed to follow. It was to take the Edinburgh dissentients, along with Rev. David Fyffe, under his own Episcopal charge :—<sup>2</sup>

“ What then must the true and faithful members of a National Church do who, through the defection of all their Bishops from the Communion of it, are deserted by them, and are left, as it were, in a state of Widowhood ? Most certainly they have no other choice left but to apply to other Bishops of their Communion to aid them in their calamitous circumstances. Their own Bishops, by becoming Strangers to the constitution of their Church, are become Strangers to them, whose call and voices they are not bound to hear ; and therefore they naturally come under the more immediate care of other Bishops of the same Communion.”

Encouraged by the accession of an Episcopal ally from across the Border, the dissentients tried to gain recruits from other parts of their own country. For example, the Rev. A. Livingstone of Dunfermline, in a letter to Bishop Alexander, dated Jan. 31st, 1744, speaks of “ strong solicitations being addressed by them to the Clergy of Fife, and that similar attempts were being made in Aberdeen, appears from his letter of March 20th, wherein he said :—

“ I'm sorry to find that the Edinburgh Schemes have had some Influence with the northern Presbyters.”

The same writer also gives us to understand that the malcontents had a particular grudge against Bishop Alexander. On May 11th, 1744, he said :—

“ My Concern for your additional Burdens is no more than what is my Duty and your present Situation calls for.”

On Aug. 23rd, he asked :—

“ But, pray, what provokes the Men especially at you ? ”

And on Aug. 30th :—

“ I'm sorry to find you so badly used by these People at Edinburgh, but what can be expected from that Quarter ? ”

<sup>1</sup> Scot. 209-10.

<sup>2</sup> Scot. 206.

## II.

This Edinburgh affair convulsed the whole Church and several *Protestations* in support of the Bishops were sent in.

The first of these contained the following declaration :—<sup>1</sup>

“ We, the subscribing Bishops and Presbyters, have thought ourselves in duty bound, for the preservation of our own Rights and Independency, and in defence and maintenance of the Principles, as well as Forms and Constitution of the Catholic Church of Christ, to disclaim, and we do disclaim, and will to the utmost of our power oppose all usurped Authority<sup>2</sup> over, or encroachments upon the Bishops and Clergy of this National Church. . . . Declaring always, as we hereby declare, that we are and own ourselves to be, of the same Communion with the Church of England,<sup>3</sup> and will endeavour on our part, to preserve union with her as Members of the same Mystical Body of the Lord Jesus.”

This *Protestation* was signed by the Bishops of Brechin, Dunkeld, Fife, and Moray, and forty-five of the Clergy in various parts of Scotland. We can watch its passage through the Diocese of Dunkeld for signature, for, writing from Forfar on Dec. 16th, 1744, to Bishop Alexander, Dean Seton says :—<sup>4</sup>

“ I am surprised that the Declaration was not arrived at your hands before the time of your writing. It came safely and in due time to me, and I immediately took it to Mr. Guthry [it would be about a forty minutes' walk to Restennet], who made out another copy thereof ; and, after we had signed both Copies, we immediately sent them to Mr. Ramsay [at Cortachy], enclosed in your Pastoral Letter, and wrapped up in a line from me to him, recommending dispatch to him. I was told by Mr. Gray [of Kirriemuir] that Mr. Ramsay put the papers into his hands in a day after having signed them, and that he in a few days sent them to Mr. Crombie [at Alyth], so that the Delay would be altogether unaccountable, were it not that you desired they should be Subscribed by Messrs. Rolton and Cameron [at Fortingal, beyond Loch Tay] and, as there is no easy access to them, 'tis to be presumed that the Stop

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich*, 234 and T.S. 308.

<sup>2</sup> *e.g.* that of Bishop Smith.

<sup>3</sup> Which Church of England ? The “ Established ” or the “ Nonjuring ” ? Dr. Grub thinks the latter (iv., p. 29 note) ; but Bishop Wordsworth in a marginal pencil note, the former, on the ground that in another similar declaration the Scottish Bishops speak of the Church of England as having “ gained the esteem of the Christian World,” which could hardly be said of the Nonjurors. Bishop Wordsworth seems undoubtedly to be right. (See *Lawson*, p. 279.)

<sup>4</sup> *Scotich*, 236.

has been in that quarter of your District. But I hope they have reached your hands before this." Here the Dean launches out at some length into the merits of the question.

Besides this first Protestation, signed by four Bishops and forty-five Clergy, there was another to the same effect received by Bishop Dunbar of Aberdeen, signed by twenty-four of his Clergy, making a total of five Bishops and sixty-nine Clergy opposing the seventeen Edinburgh Presbyters.

There was also a meeting of the Diocesan Synod of Dunkeld, held at Forfar on Feb. 1st, 1744.

To this Assembly, Bishop Alexander addressed a letter, "since the Rigour of the Season prevented his being present with them in person":—<sup>1</sup>

"What I am now to lay before you is of the highest Importance and requires your closest Attention. My Occasions having led me to Edinburgh last week, I received the Paper, which I have here enclosed and which indeed appears to me to be of a very singular strain, and I question not it will also do to you. I some time ago transmitted to you a Copy of the Minutes of our [*i.e.* the Episcopal] Synod, and, as I look upon you to be impartial, unprejudiced, honest men, incapable of being byassed by selfish and sinister views, I dare confidently appeal to you, as best able to judge, whether there be anything in them that infringes the just Priviledges of the second Order. For my part, I can safely declare with my last Breath, and I verily believe all my Colleagues, the Bishops, can do the same, that, so far from having such a Design, the very Canons they point at as tending that way *were purely intended to pave the way for a good Understanding with those very Persons who now make their grievous Complaint.*"

In reply to this communication, the Bishop received the following return from the Synod:—

"The Presbyters of the District of Dunkeld, assembled together . . . having considered the above Address of the Edinburgh Presbyters and compared it with the Canons therein referred to, were all deeply affected with the undutiful Behaviour of so many of their Brethren to their Ecclesiastical Superiors, and, being earnestly desirous to contribute what in them lies to put a Stop to such bold Encroachments on the Episcopal Authority, did unanimously resolve to draw up an Address to their Bishop, in answer to his Pastoral Letter above recorded, testifying

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

their Adherence to him and his Right Reverend Colleagues, and their sincere Resolutions to stand by him and them in support of the Episcopat against all such factious Designs."

In the Diocese of Fife also, Bishop White was summoning his Presbyters to meet at Cupar:—

"Perhaps (says the Rev. A. Livingstone on Feb. 9th) to receive Instructions as to that Address at present in Agitation."

This conjecture was right, for, writing again to Bishop Alexander on Feb. 27th, he announces the result of the meeting, which was that the Fife Clergy took the same line as those of Dunkeld. On March 30th, he adds:—

"I'm very glad to know the account you give of the Clergy of Aberdeen's conduct as to the Lybell, so hope the Edinburgh gentlemen will stand entirely upon their own legs."

At this point, therefore, we may pause to ask what the relative forces supporting each side in this serious dispute were throughout the whole Church. Fortunately, we can ascertain the full number of the Clergy. In a letter addressed to Bishop Smith, dated Dec. 13th, 1743, Bishop Keith asserts that it was 125.<sup>1</sup> Over and above the 5 Bishops, therefore, and the 69 Clergy, who are known to have given them their active support, and the 17 who were in revolt, there were 36 whose views and actions are not recorded. Of these latter, indeed, there may have been some, who, like the Dunblane Clergy, sympathised with the general line of thought of the Edinburgh dissentients, but, even if they did so, there is no evidence to show that any names are to be added to the seventeen in the metropolis who actually defied the Bishops. On the other hand there are various considerations which make it reasonable to believe that the great preponderance of opinion amongst the 36 was in favour of their Fathers in God. The fact that their signatures to the Protestations in support of the Episcopal College are not forthcoming, may be explained partly by the possibility that, the matter requiring dispatch, they could not all be reached in time in those pre-railroad days, and partly by the possibility that some of the duplicate<sup>2</sup> Addresses, though signed by them, may have since been lost. Moreover, the circumstance that it was Bishop Keith, who called Bishop Smith's attention to the fact that there were 125 Clergy in Scotland, makes it very improbable that there were additional partizans of Bishop Smith and the Edinburgh Clergy included in that number. And lastly, in the same letter, Bishop Keith affirms that, outside of

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich*, p. 196. Grub corroborates this in his note iv. p. 32. Bishop Alexander in 1746 says there might have been 130. A Legacy having been left to the Clergy in 1734 it was found that they numbered 130. *Lawson* p. 539.

<sup>2</sup> See Dean Seton's letter above.

Edinburgh, there were not more than five Presbyters who ministered by the English Liturgy, a fact which shews that the vast majority of them, like the Bishops, inherited the *Usager-Diocesan* traditions. It seems clear, therefore, that (with the exception of Rev. George Sempill in Perth, and the Rev. David Fyffe in Dundee, both of whom had been deposed from the Ministry) there were no Clergy who joined the seventeen Edinburgh dissentients in their revolt against the Bishops, but that, on the contrary, the Episcopal College were actively supported in this affair by the vast majority of the Scottish Presbyters.

### III.<sup>1</sup>

And, so supported, how did the Bishops reply to the challenge of the disaffected party?

Before we answer this question, we may briefly note that the following extract from a letter addressed on June 14th, 1744, by the Rev. Ninian Niving to Bishop Alexander, reveals an effort made towards reconciliation, of which nothing seems to have come:—

“ ’Twas agreed (he says) that Messrs. M[ackenzie], H[arper], and D[rummond] should wait upon Bishop K[eith] and propose a friendly Interview with himself, all alone, or with one or more of his Brethren with him, as should be agreed, to make Overtures for an happy Accommodation of our present differences, which have already brought us to the verge of destruction.”

But, as for the Bishops’ answer to the general challenge, the fact is that from Jan. 17th, 1744, which was the date upon which the Edinburgh Clergy repudiated the Episcopal Synod of the previous year, the Bishops as a body vouchsafed to send them no formal reply. Dr. Grub<sup>2</sup> describes their action in the following language:—

“ The commencement of the [Edinburgh Presbyters’] letter was disrespectful and there were expressions in it partaking more of the angry feeling of disputants than of reverence due by Presbyters to Bishops. . . . It is evident that [the Bishops] were more annoyed by the language of the letter than convinced by its arguments.”

Indeed Bishop Alexander in his own answer says:—

“ We would naturally have looked for some milder treatment and more regard for the Sacred Character we bear from you, our Sons.”

<sup>1</sup> The ordinary reader may find this section too technical for him.

<sup>2</sup> p. 23.

At the close of the year, however, the Presbyters sent the Bishops another communication,<sup>1</sup> which, though reiterating their demands, was couched in a more dutiful tone, and then at last, on Jan. 25th, 1745, the Primus returned them an answer, which, while postponing the consideration of their claims, contained a courteous expression of thanks for their respectful salutations.

But, although there was no formal synodical deliverance on the subject matter of the dispute, certain explanations from the Bishops' side were nevertheless forthcoming, and inasmuch as the present controversy was an important moment in the development of the disestablished Church, it will be necessary to shew the principles which guided the action of the Bishops:—

(1) *First*, let us take their reply to Bishop Smith's assertion that they had resolved to suppress the use of the English Communion Service. To begin with, it must be admitted that owing to various circumstances, such as the appearance of several editions<sup>2</sup> of the Scottish Liturgy; the prevalence of different "Usages," some in the Altar Service and some in other Offices; and to the phrases which the Bishops had used from a general point of view with regard to the *lapse* of the Concordate of 1731, wherein the use of the Prayer Book Service was definitely authorized, the favourers of the English Liturgy had some excuse, not indeed for rebelling, but at least for being somewhat confused and desirous of an explanation. The point is a complicated and technical one, which those who wish for full information will find satisfactorily discussed in Grub, Vol. IV., pp. 24-29. But at all events on this subject the Bishops let their position be clearly known.

Even Bishop Raitt, in his case against Rev. David Fyffe, made no mention of the offender's adhesion to the English Office as one of his faults.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, writing of himself in the third person in connection with that unfortunate affair, he says:—<sup>4</sup>

"He values and esteems the English Liturgy very highly; taken altogether he reckons it one of the fullest and best Forms of public Worship that any Church has been blessed with. And, though he indeed prefers the Scots, he never has, nor will impose it, and for an Evidence of this he avers that there are more in his District who administer by the English Office singly, or recede from it in fewer things, than in any other beyond the Forth."

And, if even Bishop Raitt at a moment, when he was legitimately provoked against a supporter of the English Office, could write in that strain, it was obvious that it was not the policy of the Bishops to forbid the use of the Service in question. We

<sup>1</sup> Grub. 30 and T.S. 311-5.

<sup>2</sup> A.S.O. pp. 86-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Intrusion* p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> *Intrusion* p. 100.

are not, therefore, surprised to find them at the present juncture issuing a joint manifesto, in which they say :—

“ It never was intended (as some persons have suspected) to prohibit or restrict the use of the English Liturgy in this Kingdom. So far from this, that we declare the use of this Liturgy has been and shall be as free to any Presbyter, that chooses to minister by it, as it was and has been by virtue of the Concordates.”

(2) *Secondly*, we take up their reply to the Presbyters' accusation that it was for some unworthy motive that they were suppressing the Quasi-Metropolitan power, which had been transferred to the See of Edinburgh on the death of the last Archbishop of S. Andrews in 1704. They had a double answer :—

To begin with, as to the matter of form, the Bishops of 1744 were not those who had abolished the Metropolitan power ; that had been done by the Episcopal College of 1731 by means of the Concordate, and therefore on the present occasion they were merely continuing an arrangement which had been settled previously.

And, further, that which they thus continued had nothing unworthy about it. It was a plan which had been adopted deliberately for the good of the Church, in order to remove a bone of contention.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with this point, Bishop Alexander wrote thus on May 10th :—

“ Whither the See of Edinburgh ever had a right to Vice-Metropolitan powers is a point I have no concern to enter upon, though I have heard the contrary argued from the Charter with good show of Reason. Be that as it will, the present Bishops are very injuriously blamed for giving them up. Since of all the Order none are now alive except two, and only one who was present at the Transaction *when that Sacrifice was made to the common Peace at the framing of the Concordate* ” [i.e. in 1731].

(3) Next, we come to the Presbyters' complaint that, even granting the Bishops were justified in withdrawing Metropolitan rights from the See of Edinburgh, yet they were acting injuriously towards that Diocese by not appointing an ordinary Diocesan Bishop to superintend it.

Now there was a very cogent defence for the action of the Bench in this matter. But it would at present have been highly dangerous for a Bishop to commit his explanation to paper. Bishop Alexander, however, hinted at it in his reply of May 10th, 1744 :—

<sup>1</sup> See T.S. 204-237, etc.

“Ye think fit to load us with the blame of what ye are pleased to term your long continued State of Orphancy. But how unjustly and unfairly! Since most, if not all, of you know that it is not in our power to help it, and it is certain we do from our hearts regret it, as much as ye can possibly do. I would have thought nevertheless that *this ought not to be so much as hinted at in such a paper by men of any Discretion, for Reasons neither proper nor useful to be told.*”

And what were those mysterious reasons? Fifteen years later, *i.e.* in 1759, the Bishop felt that circumstances allowed him to be a little more venturesome, and he then explained in another letter<sup>1</sup> the point at which he could at present only hint. The fact was, as we have seen, that in the settlement of the *College-Diocesan* dispute in 1731, the concession, which Bishop Rattray's side had made, was that, while much of the power which the *College* system gave to the (exiled) King was taken away, yet the Monarch was still allowed to retain the nominations to the Sees of Edinburgh and Glasgow. From the Prince's point of view the phrase was that he “inhibited” the filling up these two Sees otherwise than by nominations from himself. Moreover, through their secret service, King George's government were perfectly aware of the foregoing arrangement.

Therefore, said Bishop Alexander in effect, observe the horns of the dilemma on which we are impaled. If, on the one hand, the Bishops make a formal Application to the Prince; receive a Nomination for Edinburgh from him; consecrate a Bishop and induct him as Diocesan of Edinburgh, in virtue of that Nomination, they will without any manner of doubt be punished with the utmost rigour of the law. If, on the other hand, they fill up the vacancy without a Nomination from the Prince, two effects will follow:—*first*, they will thereby break the last practical cord of loyalty which binds them to the exiled King, a proceeding which would grieve not only themselves, but also the Edinburgh Clergy; and *secondly*, they will bring down the wrath of the Government on the Church as effectually as if they had obtained a Nomination; for King George's Ministers, knowing of the “Inhibition,” if they see a Bishop collated to Edinburgh, will certainly conclude that it has been done by virtue of a Nomination from the Prince, and will punish the whole Episcopal Bench for treasonable correspondence just as severely as if they had committed the offence.

The reason, therefore, why the Bishops did not grant the demand of the Edinburgh Clergy for the appointment of an ordinary Diocesan Bishop over them was to be found not in any discreditable motive on their part, but in the fact that, so long as they remained Jacobites, the thing was *impossible*.

<sup>1</sup> See Ch. xiii. 2, and *Grub.* 11-12.

No doubt the Bishops' cure for the evil was that the Edinburgh Clergy should waive formalities in deference to the acuteness of the political difficulties of their position, and accept the Episcopal ministrations of Bishop Keith, who happened to reside in their city.

(4) Another question in connection with Edinburgh needed to be answered. Being in the painful dilemma in which they found themselves, why did the Bishops not frankly explain to all concerned on what ground it was that they were obliged to refuse the Edinburgh demand? As soon as that question is asked, it provides its own answer. For it is obvious that it was impossible for them to present the world with a document publishing the fact that their conduct on a particular important point was ruled by their loyalty to the exiled Prince as the lawful Sovereign of these islands. All they could do was to leave Edinburgh vacant and say nothing!

(5) The last objection of the Presbyters, so far as concerns the Bishops' treatment of the See of Edinburgh, the answer to which we must record, was where they complained that it was in order to inflict another humiliation upon their Diocese that the Bishops had provided that in the case of a Bishop being Pastor of a Congregation in a Diocese other than his own, that Congregation should be deemed to be in his own Diocese. The malcontents affected to believe that the object of this was to enable the Bishop of Ross and Caithness (Keith) who lived in Edinburgh to set up an *imperium in imperio* in Edinburgh. In fact, there was no such unworthy motive in the arrangement. It was necessary in those days, in order that they might be provided with a stipend, that Bishops should hold pastoral charges and hold them, if necessary, in other Dioceses than their own. The arrangement therefore that, when they did so, their own congregation should be deemed to be in their own Diocese, was a perfectly useful and straightforward arrangement, and, as a matter of fact, worked without friction for the next century.

(6) Coming now to objections connected rather with the status of Presbyters in general than with the See of Edinburgh in particular, let us take up first that in which the dissentients complained that the Bishops had reserved to themselves an inordinate power in the appointment of members of their own Order. First, they complained because the Canons provided for the issue of a Mandate by the Primus before the Presbyters of a vacant Diocese could proceed to an election. But it is difficult to see how the unity of the Scottish Church could be maintained without such a provision, and it certainly would have put the Bishops in a most undignified position, if so important a matter as an episcopal election was always to be carried through without any formal grant of their authority. The Presbyters indeed alleged,

and with truth, that such had formerly been the custom. But then it had only been so from 1723 to 1731, a period during which the Church was all but rent asunder by the *College-Diocesan* controversy, and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." It is only fair to say, however, that the malcontents' complaint that the Bishops at this time reserved to themselves too unchecked a power of rejecting those, who had been elected under a Mandate,<sup>1</sup> has been endorsed by the subsequent progress of the Church's history.

(7) Lastly, coming to the objections against the late Episcopal Synod on point of form, let us take up the denial that it was devoid of authority, inasmuch as it had been convened without the sanction of the (exiled) Civil Power.

Fundamentally, the objection assumed that the position of "Establishment" was not merely of the *bene esse* but actually of the *esse* of the Church. That, however, the Bishops would in nowise admit. . . In their view, therefore, the established position of their Communion, which was a mere separable accident of its constitution, had come to an end, even to all intents and purposes in connection with the exiled Monarch, and therefore it was in a position, nay it was bound, to fall back into the condition, which prevailed before kings and queens had become its nursing fathers and nursing mothers. It was at present, in fact, bound to act on its own authority and initiative.

On May 10th, 1744, Bishop Alexander dealt with that point thus :—

"Another hideous clamour is raised against us, as if *we had overturned* the Constitution of the Church, by which I understand you point at the legal one before 1688. But, my Brethren, what can ye seriously mean by this accusation? Are ye yet to be told? Do ye not yet know? Do ye not feel? (I am sure your poor Brethren in the Country who bear the heat and the burden of the day, while you ly warm and at ease, contriving trouble to yourselves and them, to their sorrow do) *that that Constitution was overturned several years before many of us were born?* And I dare here appeal to your Consciences whether ye are not yourselves inwardly convinced that it is utterly impossible in our present situation to have such a Synod and such a Sanction to its Laws as the Act ye have in view requires: and [the reference is to the exile of the Civil Power] though it were possible that it would be the highest Imprudence and next to Madness to attempt it."

(8) And in conclusion there remains to be noticed the objection that the late Synod was invalid, because it violated the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 104.

former "established" Constitution by not including representatives of the second Order in its membership.

Bishop Alexander's reply to this point in his letter of May 10th, 1744, ran as follows:—

"When you accuse us of invading your Rights, it appears by your Paper you principally mean a right to sit and vote decisively in Synods with us. Now this Article we can look upon as no other than what Logicians call a *Petitio Principii*; for you must have us excused to assert our own Rights, by declaring very plainly to you that we neither can, nor will, by any means allow such decisive vote to be any of the Right of your Order. That Presbyters may be present and allowed to argue and debate or offer their advice in Synods is neither doubted nor denied. Nay, it is granted to be a decent and proper Measure and accordingly *we have made provision by a Canon for having Representatives from them in all our future Synods*. Further, if the Bishops think fit to desire it, that they may and even are obliged to give their voice or opinion at the passing of a Law, is as little disputed. But that their voting for can give any sanction to the Law, or their voting against it hinder it from passing; or that they have a Divine Right, or indeed any Right at all (when disjoined from the State) other than what the Bishops are pleased to allow them, is utterly refused."

At first sight it may seem that our Bishop takes up indefensibly high ground here, but it is to be remembered that more than a century later Dr. Pusey, whose erudition was immense, wrote thus:—<sup>1</sup>

"The amount of evidence that Bishops alone had a definitive voice in Synods is throughout the history of the Church, in proportion to the detail, in which the account of these Synods is given. The evidence must in its own nature be incidental. No one questioned then that Bishops alone had that definitive voice. No one went about to prove it."

That reply to this particular objection of the Edinburgh Presbyters was thus based on the custom of primitive times. But Bishop Alexander might also, had he chosen, have produced a reply from the modern history of the Scottish Church. For, although the Act of King Charles the Second may have given a place to the Presbyters in the legislative ecclesiastical Assembly, yet the fact was that never once from the time of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 to the day, when the Edinburgh dissentients framed their objections; that is, not for the last 108 years had Scottish Presbyters been summoned to sit with Scottish Bishops

<sup>1</sup> *Councils of the Church* II., p. 34.

*Lay Claims* 156.

in a General Synod. Instead, therefore, of blaming the present College for not having asked the Presbyters to sit with them in the recent Synod of 1743, it would have been much more proper if the Edinburgh dissentients had thanked them for passing a Canon providing that for the future the second Order of the Ministry were to be represented by their Deans in the legislative Assembly of the Church.

Alas! at the present juncture, the further prosecution of this most important controversy was suddenly and indefinitely postponed by the occurrence of a terrible catastrophe. Suffice it to say here, that henceforth external circumstances continued to be so unpropitious that it was not for another 67 years, *i.e.* in 1811, that a full and satisfactory end was put to the debate through the spontaneous admission by the Bishops of the Representatives of the Presbyters as the second Chamber of the General (now Provincial) Synod.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In my *History of the Lay Claims under the Scottish Bishops 1789-1905*, I have related how the Laity were subsequently accorded a real voice in Church Legislation amongst us.



## CHAPTER XI.

### 1743-1745—*Ordinary Diocesan Work.*

Before we leave the period with which we have been dealing, and plunge into the catastrophe of the last Jacobite rising, let us escape for a moment from the turmoil of controversy and observe the Bishop in the discharge of his ordinary diocesan duties. In pursuing this subject, our manner of arrangement will be, as before, to take the congregations of the Diocese of Dunkeld in their alphabetical order first; those in Dunblane second; and certain general points last. Although the record is in some cases very fragmentary, it is none the less, perhaps all the more, interesting on that account.

(1) *Alloa*. It has been already explained that, according to the new Canons, inasmuch as the Bishop was Pastor of this Congregation, it was considered to belong to his own Diocese. This double position of Alloa, as both the seat of the Bishop and also the sphere of his labours as a Presbyter, leads us to divide our information concerning it under the two heads of *Episcopal Acts* and *Congregational Events*.

First, therefore, for our Prelate's Episcopal Acts. These consist chiefly of Ordinations:—

To begin with we have that of Mr. Donald Robertson, a Perth resident, ordained at Bishop Keith's request, for work in Glasgow, the account of which is given at greater length than that of any of the other candidates, and is, therefore, interesting, as showing the procedure at that time adopted in the matter of admission to the Ministry.

In the following extract from a letter of the Rev. W. Erskine, of Muthill, addressed to the Bishop, on March 31st, 1744, we have a glimpse of the approach of the meeting, at which Mr. Robertson's affair was to be taken in hand:—

“ I have a letter from Robert Lyon [of Perth] to-day, telling that you are to meet with your honest Clergy at Perth against the 10th next, and inviting me to a share of the good things, that will be going, and I intend, God willing, to accept the offer. . . . I beg the favour that you would take this road [*i.e.* travel *via* Muthill] and be with me to your Dinner on Monday, because I have something to show you.”

The meeting was held in due course at the time and place thus mentioned by Mr. Erskine, and we append the account of it, which was entered in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

“ *Perth, Apr. 10th, 1744.* At the Synodical Meeting of the Clergy of this District, held in presence and under the direction of the Right Rev. Mr. John Alexander, Bishop of Dunkeld, Perth, etc. (The Meeting having been opened by Prayer) appeared Mr. Donald Robertson, Student of Divinity in this Town, and gave in to the Bishop and his Clergy a Testificat written and signed by our Rev. Brother, Mr. Laurence Drummond, Presbyter in Perth.”

The “ Testificat ” ran as follows :—<sup>1</sup>

“ Right Rev. Sir, This is to testify that the Bearer, Master Donald Robertsons, is a person, who, from his Infancy, has behaved himself prudently and Christianly, and has made good Proficiency in Letters, so that I humbly think him a fit and proper Candidate for Holy Orders, and I hope by the Blessing of God may be useful to the Service of the Church, and as to his moral Character is free of any Scandal or Church Censure. This I write as the real Sentiment of my mind, and do subscribe this with my Hand at Perth Apr. 25th, 1744.”

The candidate was also recommended by Lord Stormont. Old Mr. Drummond’s young and fiery Colleague, the Rev. Robert Lyon, indeed, had some private misgivings about his orthodoxy, for his namesake, now at Stretton in Bedfordshire, writes thus to the Bishop :—

“ W. has also a word about Dan Robson’s admission to Trials ; it seems he is looked upon by L[yon] at Perth and some others as a Whitefieldian. Pray what is there in that affair ? ”<sup>2</sup>

Still that was only private rumour, and no formal objection having been made to the Candidate’s application in Synod, the Minute in the *Diocesan Register* continues thus :—

“ Which Petition the Bishop and his Clergy having taken into their Consideration, readily complied therewith, and appointed the said Mr. Donald Robertsons to attend the next Meeting of the Clergy of this District to be held in the house of the Rev. Mr. James Hill at Blairgowrie on June 12th next, and there to give in a written Discourse in the Latin Tongue upon the Christian Doctrine of Justification [evidently selected to test his Whitefieldianism !] by way of Exegesis ; also a written Discourse, in the method of a

<sup>1</sup> D.R. Appendix III. p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> See also *Scotich. V.*, 261-2.

Sermon upon S. John iii. 5 ("Except a man," etc.), both of his own Composition and to apply himself with diligence in the meantime to the reading of the Antiquities of the Christian Church, particularly those of the second and third centuries, that he may be the better prepared to answer such questions as shall be put to him, relating to the History, Heresies, and Schisms of that Period. Likewise that he shall have his Thoughts much employed upon the Canon of the Holy Scripture and its Divine Authority, that he may answer such questions as may be put to him relative thereto, That upon a fair and impartial Tryal of his Qualifications and Ability for the Holy Ministry he may, if found qualified, be recommended to our Bishop for Ordination. This, our Synodical Deed, in the presence of our Bishop, is in the name of the Clergy of this District, signed by

(sic sub.) WIL. SETON, Dean.  
FR. CROMBIE, Clerk.

The meeting which was appointed to examine the candidate duly took place at Blairgowrie on June 12th, 1744, and his answers were found to be "accurate, orthodox, and gave general satisfaction." Thereupon he was required to give a declaration of his entire sincerity and, having been recommended to the Bishop, on St. Peter's Day, June 29th, 1744, in the Chapel at Alloa:—

"Mr. Donald Robertsons in Perth, after Tryals of his sufficiency as above, was ordained a Deacon in the said Chapel [*i.e.* Bishop Alexander's at Alloa]—present Mr. George Innes at Balgowan and Mr. Walter Erskine at Muthill, Priests, Mr. William Abernethie, Deacon, and sundry Laicks."

On March 19th, 1745, he was ordained Priest by Bishop Alexander, at the request of the Primus, in the vacancy of the Bishopric of Glasgow, for Ecclefechan in Annandale,<sup>1</sup> and all that is known of his subsequent career is that he signed the address of confidence in the Bishops against the seventeen Edinburgh malcontents.<sup>2</sup>

The next Ordination was that of Mr. John Blair. Some difficult negotiations<sup>3</sup> had to be transacted before this candidate could be admitted to the Diaconate. These were very characteristic of the then state of affairs in the Church. For, in the first instance he seems to have contemplated the Diocese of Edinburgh as the sphere of his future labours. He came forward, however, under the auspices of the Rev. Ninian Niving of Torbrex, near Stirling,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Hist. Perth*, p. 152 (note).

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich. V.* p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> For which see Rev. Ninian Niving's letters to Bishop Alexander of Feb. 4 and 14, 1744.

and that loyal divine, finding that the young man was being advised by the Rev. William Harper of Bothkennar to stand his trials before the Synod of the Edinburgh dissentients, used his influence with him to make his application, in the vacancy of the Diocese, to Bishop Keith, the Primus. But after a time an opening for Mr. Blair appeared in Fife, and his case passed, therefore, into the hands of Bishop White. We then find that Prelate writing to Bishop Alexander that the candidate's Ordination "was acceptable to him,"<sup>1</sup> and so in the end he was ordained by our Bishop in his own Chapel:—

"*Alloa, May 30th, 1744.* Mr. John Blair, Governour to Sir Harry Stirling of Ardoch's sons . . . after having given proof of (his) sufficiency before a Committee of the Clergy appointed for that purpose (was) ordained Deacon<sup>2</sup> in the Bishop's Chapel there [*i.e.* at Alloa]; present of the Brethren, Mr. David Young of Polmais; Mr. Ninian Niving at Torbrex;<sup>3</sup> Mr. Alexander Livingstone in Dunfermline; Mr. William Bell at Doune, and Mr. William Erskine at Muthill, with several of the Laity."

A third Ordination, *i.e.* that of Mr. William Abernethy, took place in the same year. As he was destined hereafter to become a notable figure in the Church, the following references to his entry upon the ministry will be interesting to students of Scottish Church history. They are derived chiefly from the letters of the Rev. A. Livingstone of Dunfermline, which were addressed at the time to Bishop Alexander.

On January 31st, 1744, the writer says:—

"I returned safely after visiting Mr. Abernethie, who is considerably recovered and kindly remembers you."

On February 9th:—

"Mr. Abernethie is now able to walk abroad, whose compliments you always have."

On March 20th:—

"I did not doubt but that Mr. Abernethie had signified his Inclinations to you of entering into Orders long since, and that you had something in view for him, which I wish you may, for he is nowise provided for as yet and has little prospect. . . . The Lad is very deserving. If the matter comes to that Issue that there will be occasion for my addressing my Bishop [*i.e.* Bishop White] in his behalf, my endeavours shall not be wanting and I hope I shall be successful."

<sup>1</sup> *Scotch.* 289-290.

<sup>2</sup> He was ordained Priest there, Nov. 23, 1744. See (15) in this Chapter.

<sup>3</sup> A Sermon by Mr. Niving entitled, *Jesus Christ in the Poor*, preached at Stirling in 1739 and published by Sands in Edin.; is in Perth Cathedral Library 72.

On March 30th :—

“ I’m very willing to do the Bearer [*i.e.* Mr. Abernethie] all the service I can with my Bishop, only you and he must find out some sufficient *causa petendi* wherewith I can address him, or expect to meet with success. Meantime I wish you may have some comfortable settlement in view for him.”

On April 3rd :—

“ I saw Mr. Abernethie yesternight. I find he designs for Coupar : what service I can do him will not be wanting.”

On April 15th, Bishop White wrote to Bishop Alexander :—<sup>1</sup>

“ Mr. Livingstone in his letter along with Mr. W. Abernethie pleads with me to refer him to you for Trials and receiving the Order of Deacon ; the gentleman himself desires this. I am loath to put any hardship upon him and therefore remit him to you to order his Trials and confer that dignity upon him. I am persuaded your Character of him is just and your hopes of him right founded.”

On April 20th, therefore, Mr. Livingstone wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

“ The Bearer [*i.e.* Mr. Abernethie] has met with success in his affair with my Bishop, as you’ll find by his Letter to you. . . . No doubt you’ll make use of the Dispensation given to the best advantage of the Candidate.”

On May 11th :—

“ The Bearer is desirous that I should be present at his Trials, whom I’m fond to oblige but I think this Request (?) needless. I design not to be any of his Examiners and hope you’ll excuse me. I’m perfectly satisfied as to his Qualifications, so let those, who are strangers to him, try their Hand upon him.”

On May 30th the following entry occurs in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

(Along with Mr. Blair). “ Mr. William Abernethie, Governor to Colonel Hacket of Pittfirran’s Sons, after having given proof of (his) sufficiency before a Committee of Clergy appointed for that purpose (was) ordained Deacon<sup>2</sup> in the Bishop [Alexander’s] Chapel there [*i.e.* Alloa], present of the Brethren [the same as at Mr. Blair’s Ordination].

About a week later Bishop White<sup>3</sup> wrote to Bishop Alexander :

“ Your two Ordinations are acceptable to me, as it will be to see Mr. Abernethie here.” [*i.e.*, at Coupar-Fife].

<sup>1</sup> *Scoti.* 289.

<sup>2</sup> For his Ordination as Priest by Bishop Alexander at Alloa on Dec. 14, 1744, see (13) of this Chapter.

<sup>3</sup> *Scot.* 290.

In going to that town, of course, the young Deacon passed out of the jurisdiction of Bishop Alexander, but having taken him so far, we may add a notice of what must have been the first occasion on which he officiated. On June 2nd, Mr. Livingstone wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

“ The Bearer supplied for me last Sunday and acquitted himself abundantly well.”

Here follows another Ordination, *i.e.* that of the Rev. Duncan Cameron to the Priesthood, but, as it took place at Fortingal and not at Alloa, the details are given under the heading of Fortingal in this chapter.

The last Ordination belonging to this period took place in the following spring. The contemporary narrative<sup>1</sup> of it is as follows:—

“ *April 30th, 1745.* This day the Clergy having been convened, appeared Mr. Charles Rose, Student in Divinity, concerning whom a letter was produced from the Bishop, desiring that his Tryals might be dispatched with all possible expedition and accordingly it was agreed that he should be admitted to Tryals and he was ordered to compose a popular Sermon upon Ps. cxxii. 6 (*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*), and, as his circumstances required that the same should be taken off his hands sooner than all the Clergy of the District could conveniently meet, it was agreed that the Rev. Messrs. William Seton, David Guthry, William Gray and John Ramsay should meet at Forfar on any day they should condescend upon and that, after a fair and impartial Tryal of his Abilitys for the Holy Ministry, they might (if they found him duly qualified) recommend him to the Bishop for Ordination. Then the Meeting was adjourned and the next Meeting appointed at Forfar on June 19th.”

Evidently the Committee thus appointed to deal with the case, satisfied themselves with the young man's fitness, for the following entry occurs in the *Register* :—

“ *Alloa, May 17th, 1745.* Mr. Charles Rose in Perth was ordained Deacon there [*i.e.* in Alloa], present Mr. William Erskine in Muthill and Mr. Robert Lyon in Perth, with sundry Laicks.”

Now, reading between the lines of this account of Mr. Rose's Ordination, matter of great interest becomes speedily obvious. For why was it that the Bishop was in such haste to have examination “ despatched with all possible expedition ” ? We have only to look at the date for an explanation—April and May, 1745. It is true that Prince Charlie did not sail for Scotland for a little over two months yet, but it looks as if our Prelate was aware that

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

trouble was brewing and thought it prudent to get his public engagements performed, before the approaching explosion occurred. Again, the text given to the Candidate for his trial Sermon, *i.e.* *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, certainly strengthens the idea that the Bishop was anxiously looking forward to critical times.

There are certain other points of interest about this Ordination also. For one thing the notice of its occurrence was the last entry made in the *Dunkeld Register* for the next twenty years. For another, Mr. Rose was the son of Bishop Alexander's first Diocesan, Bishop James Rose of Fife, and therefore nephew of the well-known Bishop Alexander Rose of Edinburgh. For yet another his sister, Miss Stewart Rose, was the fiancée of the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth.

Mr. Rose's ordination as Presbyter is not recorded in the *Register*, but in later entries he is described as Priest.<sup>1</sup> His entry upon that sacred office took place, therefore, in the very darkest days.<sup>2</sup> One thing is certain, and that is that to the day of his death he was the most Jacobite of all Jacobites, and there can be little doubt that the circumstances of his Ordination contributed to make him so.

So much for Bishop Alexander's Episcopal acts performed in Alloa during this period. It is now time to pass on to the slender notices which remain of his purely pastoral activities there. They are two in number, and are as follows :—

On April 20th, 1744, Mr. Livingstone refers to the Bishop as being very busy with his congregational work, "Pentecost being so near."

In another letter, dated Feb. 9th, of the same year, Mr. Livingstone gives us a glimpse of a difficulty, which beset our Prelate from his double position as Diocesan and Pastor of a charge without an Assistant :—

"As to your proposal of my supplying your Charge some of the Sundays of this holy Season, I am truly much straitened, for you cannot think what grumblings and grudgings are among my little Flock, if they want [*i.e.* are without] Worship but for one Day [*i.e.* one Sunday] . . . So beg you'll have me [*i.e.* Mr. Livingstone] excused. I suppose you [*i.e.* Bishop Alexander] may get Mr. Young [*i.e.* of Polmais] to do something or other for you, or if not, I should think your People could not begrudge your absence for one day, especially when you are necessarily called from them about the Discharge of your Episcopal Office."

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XIII.

<sup>2</sup> And not improbably in the Diocese of Aberdeen, as he succeeded Mr. Leith as Chaplain to Lord Arbutnot.

The following extract from a letter of the Rev. W. Harper, of Bothkennar, shews that our Bishop occasionally performed Episcopal offices in the vacant Diocese of Edinburgh :—

“ I am sorry I have it not in my Power upon so short an Advertisement to convene any competent number to be confirmed against next Sunday.”

(2) *Alyth*. At the Synod of Nov. 15th, 1743, the Presbyter of this place, the Rev. F. Crombie, sent an apology for non-attendance, which was accepted as “ relevant.” On April 10th, 1744, as Synod Clerk, he signed the instructions regulating the examination of Mr. Donald Robertson.<sup>1</sup>

(3) *Balgowan*. At the Synod of Nov. 15th, 1743, the Rev. George Innes apologised in the same way as Mr. Crombie for non-attendance. On June 29th, 1744, he was present in Bishop Alexander’s Chapel at Alloa at Mr. Donald Robertson’s Ordination.

(4) *Blairgowrie*. The general account of things already given under the heading of the years 1741-1742 is applicable also to the present period. On May 20th, 1743, Mr. Crombie again preached a Sermon preparatory to Holy Communion, and we notice that the distribution of tokens was by no means a mere formality, because on April 3rd and Dec. 11th, 1743, we have instances of moral offenders being re-admitted to reception only after “ Penance.” There were private Celebrations on April 15th, 1745, and other dates. The annual Baptisms were respectively 9, 7, and 10, and in 1744 there were three Marriages. A Harvest Thanksgiving was held at Bishop Alexander’s direction on Nov. 20th, 1743.

Bishop Raitt’s sentence against the Rev. D. Fyfe was intimated by Mr. Hill at Muthill on Sept. 11th, and at Blairgowrie on Sept. 18th, 1743.

The Committee of Synod appointed to examine Mr. Donald Robertson for Ordination met in Mr. Hill’s house on June 12th, 1744.

(5) *Carsebank*. The only surviving notices of the Rev. David Guthry belonging to this period are those given in the *Dunkeld Register* under the dates Feb. 19th and April 30th, 1745, which have already been quoted. On the earlier of these two occasions it was at a meeting in Mr. Guthry’s house that the first move was formally made in the matter of Charles Rose’s Ordination :—

“ *Restennet*, Feb. 19th, 1745. The Clergy being again met, a Letter was produced from the Bishop, signifying his desire that Mr. Charles Ross, Student in Divinity, should, as soon as he thought convenient, be entered upon Tryals,

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

that so, if found qualified, he might be put in Deacon's orders and accordingly it was agreed that he should attend the next meeting at Memus, Aprile the 30 next to come."<sup>1</sup>

And at the second of these meetings, Mr. Guthry was one of the four Clergy appointed to conduct the examination of the Candidate.

(6) *Forfar*. Most of the notices of Forfar during these years having other connections, appear elsewhere also. But we will mention them briefly here, along with the two, which do not. <sup>2</sup>In 1743 Bishop Raitt sent the Rev. David Rose, Minister at Lethnet and Lochlee; the Rev. Thomas Ogilvie, of Kinaltie; and Mr. John Maitland at Caralston to expostulate with the Rev. David Fyffe, that troublesome Presbyter, when he was proposing to invade Dundee. On his way home from Glamis, Mr. Rose stopped in Forfar, doubtless with Dean Seton, and wrote his report to the Bishop there.

On Aug. 9th, 1743, after Mr. Fyffe deserted Glamis, one of the Glamis managers wrote to a meeting of the Dunkeld Clergy asking for help. Dean Seton sent on the application to the newly-consecrated Bishop, and the latter instructed him as being the nearest Clergyman to do his best in the meantime for the vacant charge.<sup>3</sup>

On Jan. 14, 1744, the deserted charge being still vacant, the Dean again wrote to the Bishop giving an account of an endeavour which had been made to bring about an appointment.<sup>3</sup>

On April 2nd, 1744, the Earl of Strathmore, not being satisfied with the proposed successor to Mr. Fyffe, suggested that some of the Glamis congregation should attend the Meeting-House in Forfar.<sup>3</sup> On Apr. 10th and 30th, our Presbyter signed the necessary papers in connection with two of the Ordinations<sup>4</sup> and acted as one of the examiners of Mr. Charles Rose.

No doubt some of the present members of the Congregation at Forfar have wondered how the flock got on in the very height of the Jacobite rising. Well, writing to Bishop Alexander in Sept. 1746, Dean Seton says that at Christmas [1745], the very time when Prince Charlie was in full retreat from England, and had reached Glasgow, he "communicated 50 persons in three days in as many Diets."<sup>5</sup>

(7) *Fortingall*. The only mention of this Charge in the *Dunkeld Register* is as follows:—On July 5th, 1744, at "Nether Blairish in Fortingale":—

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion*.

<sup>3</sup> See 8 in this chapter.

<sup>4</sup> See 1 in this chapter.

<sup>5</sup> *Lexicon* lxxviii.

"Mr. Duncan Cameron, Deacon, was ordained Priest. Present, Messrs. George Robertson of Ardrrie-Dynat and George Innes in Perth, Priests; and Glenlyon, elder and younger, with a numerous Congregation of Laicks."

Nor is there sufficient information from elsewhere such as to enable us to expand the brief Minute in the Register. There are, however, two sentences in the letters addressed by the Rev. A. Livingstone to the Bishop, which evidently refer to this Highland excursion of his. On June 21st, 1744, Mr. Livingstone writes:—

"Let me know, when you goe to Athol." And on Aug. 15th:—

"I was favoured with yours this week and doe hereby heartily congratulat you upon your safe Return from your Visitation."

(8) *Glamis*. As might be expected owing to the unfortunate affair of him who was Presbyter here, which has been detailed at length in Chap. VII. we have comparatively full information concerning this charge.

The following extract from a letter<sup>1</sup> addressed on Aug. 9th, 1743, by William Gammack, one of the Managers (for Glamis was not merely a private Chapel) to a meeting of the Diocesan Clergy being held at "Megil" will explain the local situation:—

"Very Reverend Gentlemen, I am desired by a very considerable Part of our Number in this Congregation, which I suppose by this Time every one of you knows, is deserted by Mr. Fyfe, without so much as his telling any of us of his doing so, to lay our desolate and deserted Condition before your Very Reverend Meeting this Day; desiring the Favour of you, for some two or three Sundays to appoint some of your worthy Number to officiate in the Meeting-House here, so that our small Congregation may be kept together for some time, till proper Measures can be concerted by our Managers and till Application be made by them to the Bishop for supplying our vacant Pulpit. The Rev. Mr. William Gray [of Kirriemuir] was pleased upon my Application to supply us upon Sunday last, when our Congregation (as he can inform you) upon a very short Warning was fully met."

The Dean seems accordingly to have referred the matter to the newly-consecrated Bishop, and on Aug. 27th, 1743, he received the following reply:—<sup>2</sup>

"Very Rev. and dear Sir, You have, enclosed in this, my answer to the letter of Address from your Clergie<sup>3</sup>; but,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ch.*

<sup>2</sup> D. R. Appendix II.

<sup>3</sup> That given at end of Chap. IV.

as a Vacancy has happened at Glammis by the wicked and disorderly behaviour of that unhappy Man, Mr. Fife, I have further to recommend to you, and must beg it as a favour, because you lie most contiguous to these People and have presumed to be best acquainted with them, that you would sound their Inclinations and know whether they can be brought to make a comfortable Settlement for another Clergyman . . . in which case, if they have not one already in view for themselves, there is some hope of getting them soon provided to their satisfaction. I commend you to the Divine Blessing and Protection, And am, V.R. & D. Sir, Your Affte Br. & Servt., John Alexander."

The Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie describes the next step for us in his *Session Register* :—

"Sept. 4, 1743. That day I officiated at Glamis before and afternoon. S. Mt. xviii. 20 and 1 Pet. iv. 8. There also I intimated a Sentence of Deposition<sup>1</sup> pronounced by ye R. R. Mr. Ja. Raitt, Bishop of Brechin, against Mr. David Fyfe, formerly Presbyter at Glamis and Glenboy for desertion of his own Charge, and intruding himself into the Seagate Meeting-House at Dundee."

Judging from the texts, Mr. Hill's Sermons on the occasion seem to have been appropriate. In the morning we can imagine that, from the words *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*, he expatiated on Church Authority; and in the evening, from the words *Have fervent Charity amongst yourselves*, he waxed eirenical.

Evidently it was not so easy a matter as the Bishop at first fondly hoped, to fill the vacancy. The following letter,<sup>2</sup> addressed on Jan. 14th, 1744, by Dean Seton to the Bishop, shows that the charge was still unfilled, notwithstanding some negotiations to fill it :—

"R.R.S. What is in the other page was wrote in the Presence of the Heads of the Glammis Congregation, to which I have to add that, though I believe the Funds they lay down for the support of a Clergyman may probably prove good, yet I am sorry to learn from some of themselves that they want a man to officiat amongst them, who will not only read the Rubrick [MS. imperfect] to the end etc., but likewise administer the B. Sacrt. of the Lord's Supper in the way prescribed in the English Communion Office and retain what the People of Dundee call the *Memento*<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The full text of which is given on p. 71 of *The Intrusion*.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gordon's MSS.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. the *Oblation* from the Scottish Office, which it seems that even Bishop Ochterlonie used in the Seagate Chapel.

without this some of them say that the Clergyman will never be agreeable to the noble Family of Strathmore, nor will they contribute for his Subsistence. And how far your gratifying them in this will be for the good of the Church, I leave it for yourself to judge. The choice of a man is entirely left to you (?) L. Mary (?) . . any person that is not recommended so. And though the Choice should be referred to the neighbouring Clergy it would non-pluss us to find one, especially seeing they are not for Mr. Graeme<sup>1</sup> (more than we would be), who supplies the Vacancy at present."

The following letter from Joseph Robertson of 'Hadington,' dated April 2nd, 1744, shows that an attempt was actually made to bring in a Clergyman, who was not of the school of thought desired by the Dean's informants, and that it was a failure :—

"I have had a long Conference with Lady Mary, wherein I represented what my Lord's Factor had told of his Lordship's Orders, as a thing Immopble [impossible] and such as Only Could come of his owen Head. I was greatly surprised at my Lady's not seeming to doubt But it was his Lordship's Order, He gave the gentleman [*i.e.* the Presbyter proposed to be settled at Glamis ?] a very good Character, as one that in any Instance, if he could, would Gladly serve the interest of the Church, But my Lord for Certain Reasons was against any of his Frenedes Medling in that affair [*i.e.* that of David Fyffe ?] and, if he were to have a Chaplain there [at Glamis ?] it should be none but Mr. Dundas [who wrote a pamphlet in defence of David Fyffe], as that [*i.e.* the appointment of the candidate] might at present be disagreeable and Troublesome. The Tennents [*i.e.* tenants] were at no Great Distance from two or three neibouring Meeting Houses [*e.g.* Forfar and Kirriemuir] any of which as most convenient they might join, I am heartily sorry that this leaves no more room for application to that Family, a little Time I hope will make Alterations to the Advantage of the Church."

This letter is very obscurely expressed, but there is no doubt that the final outcome was that, though Lord Strathmore did not separate from the Communion of the Bishop, the latter would not have Mr. Dundas and the Earl would not have the Bishop's nominee, and so Glamis was condemned to remain vacant.

(9) *Kirriemuir*. The scanty references to this charge during the present period are as follows :—

<sup>1</sup> Probably Mr. Graeme of Souterton, who was of Anti-Usager sympathies.

On the first Sunday in August, 1743, when the duty at Glamis was supplied from without, it was the Rev. William Gray of Kirriemuir who came to the rescue.<sup>1</sup>

On Oct. 16, 1744, there was a Synodical meeting of the Clergy held here,<sup>2</sup> but the Minute of it shows that it was a very brief one :—

“ This day they met again, but, as no business of importance came before them, they adjourned, appointing their next meeting at Restennet, Feb. 19, 1745.”

On April 30th, 1745, Mr. Gray was appointed one of the examiners of Mr. Charles Rose for the Diaconate.<sup>3</sup>

(10) *Meigle*. It was here that the meeting of Clergy was held on Aug. 9th, 1743, to which Mr. William Gammack addressed his appeal for help at Glamis.<sup>1</sup> The *Blairgowrie Register* gives us our only other glimpse of Mr. Crokat during these years :—

“ Jan. 20th, 1744. This day at the desire of Mr. Crokat, Presbyter at Meigle, I [*i.e.* Rev. J. Hill] baptized to James Doctor, Merchant in Coupar and Margaret Swan, his Wife, a son named Robert, born 16th Current.”

(11) *Memus*. This village is situated about 5 miles from Kirriemuir, and the Presbyter in charge was the Rev. John Ramsay. There is only one surviving reference to it at this time. It was here that the Synodical Meeting took place, at which the Bishop declared urgency for the Ordination of Mr. Charles Rose to the Diaconate on Apr. 30th, 1745, and at which Mr. Ramsay was appointed one of the examiners of the candidate.

(13) *Nairne*. Earlier in this chapter we<sup>3</sup> have had an account of the Ordination of Mr. Willian Abernethy as Deacon, with the design of his settling with Bishop White at Cupar-Fife. This arrangement, however, did not last long. An offer indeed of the Chaplaincy in Lord Arbuthnot's family, as successor to Mr. Leith, was declined. An effort also, which was made to have Mr. Abernethy settled at Doune, and concerning which Mr. Livingstone wrote to the Bishop on June 21st, 1744 :—

“ I find Lord Murray concerns himself in the affair of Doune for the Bearer [*i.e.* Mr. A.] and I hope shall be successful,” came to nothing. But six months later there occurs the following entry in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

“ *Alloa, Dec. 19, 1744.* Mr. William Abernethy, Deacon, was ordained Priest to serve the Congregation at *Nairne and Logie* in the said Chapel [*i.e.* at Alloa] present, Messrs. Niving, Harper, Erskine, Blair, and many Laicks.”

<sup>1</sup> See (8) foregoing.

<sup>2</sup> D. R.

<sup>3</sup> Above (1).

On Christmas Day, 1744, Mr. Abernethy celebrated the Holy Eucharist at Nairne, and in a letter<sup>1</sup> addressed to the Bishop on Jan. 5th, 1745, the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill says :—

“ Mr. Abernethy and I got safely to Machany [near Blackford ]  
I have since seen Lord and Lady Nairn there. They are  
much pleased with Mr. Abernethy in everything.”

(14) *Perth.* After the split, which occurred in this Congregation in 1740, the revolvers under the Rev. George Sempill succeeded in retaining possession of the Meeting-House in what is now called Parliament Close<sup>2</sup> in the High Street, where they carried on public worship. The other half of the flock, which remained true to the Bishop, still shepherded by the Rev. Laurence Drummond and the Rev. Robert Lyon, were therefore obliged to rent a hall, the site of which, however, is forgotten. Their affairs<sup>3</sup> were managed under a Constitution by seven Managers, of whom one of the two Presbyters was always called to the chair. Mr. Lyon tells us that much to his own disappointment the Scottish Office was not used at the Altar. He was accustomed, however, to add the Oblation and Invocation from it to the English Prayer of Consecration. He made that statement on Nov. 28th, 1743. On March 18th, 1744, he wrote thus to the Bishop :—

“ It is generally desired that you should be with us a Sunday and you'll find it necessary because they expect a visit from you at Balgowan and Nairne. What number we'll have here to confirm I cannot say, because our examination is not yet over but I presume they will not be many.”

In April, 1745, the Congregation began a case, which was never ended, against Mr. Sempill's people with a view to recovering the Old Meeting House. Mr. Lyon's housekeeper was his sister, Cicely, to whom he was much attached, and he was engaged to be married to Miss Stewart Rose, the sister of the Mr. Charles Rose, who lived in Perth, and whose Ordination has already been described.<sup>4</sup>

So much for the charges in Dunkeld. We come now to those of Dunblane :—

(15) *Doune.* We have a glimpse into the affairs of this Congregation in 1744.

The Rev. William Bell announced his resignation and prepared to move to Edinburgh. Whereupon Mr. J. Moir, the Bishop's bookseller in Edinburgh, wrote to him as follows, upon May 29th:—

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 596.

<sup>2</sup> Perth City Records.

<sup>3</sup> Kilmaveonaig MS.

<sup>4</sup> The foregoing paragraph is an abbreviation of Ch. XVI. of my *Ep. Hist.*  
*Perth.*

"I find Mr. Bell has already insisted, or is to insist, that one of the Candidates must preach at Doun next Sunday, because Lady Jean goes off, and I am much mistaken if he has not a warm side to Mr. Blair. This I let you know that you may do your best for the other [*i.e.* Mr. Abernethy] . . . I wish our friend had it."

On June 15th, Bishop White wrote :—<sup>1</sup>

"Mr. Bell writes me that he's to be passive with regard to the Choice of Blair or Abernethie for Doune."

In the following sentence from a letter<sup>2</sup> addressed on Aug. 9th to the Bishop from the Rev. Ninian Niving we catch sight of Mr. Bell in his actual "flitting" :—

"Mr. Bell and his Wife were a night at our House on the way to Edinburgh.<sup>3</sup> He met her at Stirling."

On Oct. 9th, the Managers addressed the following letter to the Primus. Properly speaking, it ought now to have been sent to Bishop Alexander, but it is not surprising that the Lay people of a small town in Perthshire should not yet be familiar with the Canons so recently issued by the Episcopal Synod, and in communicating with the Primus, they were only following old custom :

"We, whose names are hereto subscribed, members of the Episcopal Congregation at Down, having ground to believe that Mr. John Blair, a Deacon of this Church, is a fit Person to supply our present Vacancy, have conversed with him on that Head and his own Letter, which comes inclosed under the same Cover, will signify his Resolution as to the Proposal made to him. There is nothing wanting, then, towards our speedy Settlement, but your Concurrence as Primus, which we presume will be readily obtained"<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Blair's enclosed letter ran as follows :—

"I cannot but have a great regard to the Unanimity of the Gentlemen and other Members of the Meeting House at Down in fixing upon me to undertake the Charge of it. In case of your concurring with them, as I have given myself up to the Service of the Church, I have nothing to object but my own Insufficiency, which makes me stand in much need of your Prayers, to which I commend myself."

The Primus appears to have referred the matter to Bishop Alexander, for in the *Dunkeld Register* we have the following notice :—

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* 289-90.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 37.

<sup>3</sup> After this Mr. Bell is more than once mentioned in Bishop Alexander's correspondence as being in Edinburgh.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 423.

" *Alloa, Nov. 23rd, 1744.* Mr. John Blair, Deacon, was ordained Priest to serve the Congregation at Down, in the Chapel at Alloa—present, Mr. Ninian Niving at Torbrex and Mr. William Harper at Bothkennar, Priests, with many Laicks."

(16) *Dunblane.* One item of information concerning the Rev. J. Blair has been held back until now, because it gives us the only glimpse which is forthcoming into the state of affairs in the charge of Dunblane. It is to the effect that in the negotiations which took place in connection with Mr. Blair's Ordination, the Rev. Ninian Niving directed him on Feb. 4th, 1744, to procure a testimonial from the Rev. Robert "Dowglas," declaring the blamelessness of his conduct while he was a member of his meeting house. This is the last extant notice during the 18th century of a Congregation existing at Dunblane.

(17) *Muthill.* The old Meeting House, acquired in 1698, when the Congregation were expelled from the Parish Church, was still in use.<sup>1</sup> It was a very humble edifice. The Rev. W. Erskine, however, was one of the most faithful of Pastors, and he baptized no fewer than 25 persons in 1743, and 25 in 1744. On March 31st of the latter year, as we have already seen, he begged Bishop Alexander in travelling from Alloa to the Synodical meeting of Clergy in Perth, which was to be held on April 10th, to spend a night at Muthill. He was present at Mr. Donald Robertson's Ordination at Alloa on June 29th, and on Aug. 14th, at which date it was found necessary that he should travel to Newcastle with two of Lord Strathallan's boys, he asked the Bishop to request Mr. Abernethy to officiate for a Sunday or two for him at Muthill.

We may fitly end this chapter with some account of points in connection with public Worship, which apply to the Diocese as a whole, and indeed sometimes beyond it:—

(1) There is interesting information about the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

As we have seen, the Rev. Robert Lyon, in his letter<sup>2</sup> to the Bishop of Nov. 28th, 1744, expressed his regret that, in Perth, circumstances would not allow him to use the Scottish Office. But, he adds, that "All in this District [*i.e.* the Diocese of Dunkeld] are unanimous in the Scotch," and he goes on to say that the same holds good throughout the entire Church, especially in the Dioceses of Brechin, Fife, and "benorth the Mearns":—

"The majority who use the Scotch Liturgy is so great that they are now but very few, who do otherwise, and these few in the southern parts, mostly overawed by some ignorant Laity."

<sup>1</sup> *Shepherd* pp. 15, 28.

<sup>2</sup> T. S. 300.

Bishop Raitt's testimony<sup>1</sup> in the same year entirely confirms Mr. Lyon's statement :—

"Above two-thirds of our Clergy (he says) have always administered the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by the Scots Office only; and by far the greatest part of those, who do not take themselves to it solely, yet have been in the use of consecrating and generally distributing too by it."

Of course the edition of the Liturgy alluded to in the above extracts was that which had been evolved since the death of Bishop Rose in 1720, but at the date which we have now reached, an event occurred, which was destined later on to introduce an important modification into the Office. This was the publication in 1744, under the auspices of our friend, the Rev. Robert Lyon of Stretton, of the late Bishop Rattray's posthumous volume, *The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem*, a work concerning which our eminent Liturgiologist, Bishop Dowden, has written thus :—<sup>2</sup>

"It is certainly a very remarkable production for its day, and even the Liturgiologist of our own time (1884) . . . cannot fail to admire the sagacity and sound judgment that marks so much of the Scottish Bishop's work. Indeed Rattray's *Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem* cannot be considered as yet superseded, and deserves even now a place in the library of every liturgical student."

Along with the *Ancient Liturgy* itself there was printed an adaptation of it intended for actual use.

An account of the *Scottish Office* and of the effect which Bishop Rattray's investigations had upon it will be deferred until our narrative reaches the date, at which (1764) his principal suggestions were actually embodied in the text of the Liturgy.<sup>3</sup>

Meantime a few words about the early external fortunes of the learned Prelate's volume may not be without an interest of their own :—

On Jan. 17th, 1744, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

"I have yet found no more Subscribers for your Book but Mr. Carstairs, nor truly have I hopes for any more in this Country, the poverty of some and the bad principles of others occasioning it. I spoke to old Barclay about it, but he said he would rather give 10 Crowns that it were not published, for it would turn us all wild. However he will have other Notions of things in the after State, which in all human appearance he is not far from."

<sup>1</sup> *Intrusion* p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> A. S. w. 91.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. xvii. (3).

On Jan. 14th, Dean Seton, writing to the Bishop, said :—<sup>1</sup>

“ The Subscriptions for the Liturgy go on very heavily. The Story of the new Communion Office, said to be settled in a late Convocation, had not Dr. Rattray’s Death prevented it, and still in the hands of many amongst us, must make us tender of demanding subscriptions even from our own Laity.”

On March 27th, the Rev. Ninian Niving wrote :—

“ Sir Harry refused to subscribe as Mr. Blair tells me. . . . I addressed the Doctor last week before Mr. Dundas and some others. He positively refused, insisted much on the present division [*i.e.* the Edinburgh revolt] and said he was much mistaken, if this Book would contribute to make up the Breach. I wished I had not spoken.”

On April 25th, the Rev. G. Graeme of Glasgow wrote :—

“ Friday last, I know not how, the *Clementine Liturgy* [which was included in Bishop R’s Volume] came to be spoken of here ’twixt Mr. Morison, my Lord Blantyre and me, but he gave me 5 sh. for a copy of it to my Lord. I had spoke to my Lord and Mr. Morison so often about subscribing, that I was resolved not to trouble them any more.”

Notwithstanding all that discouragement, however, Mr. Lyon pushed on with his task. On May 8th, he wrote to Bishop Alexander from London :—

“ As to *Lit. Jac.* it is *tandem* in the press. And although G. [can this be Bishop Gordon ?] has suddenly (?) withdrawn his assistance, I hope it will come out tollerably well, for the Printer promises his utmost diligence and to have it expedite in the month of July. In printing the Subscribers I think there will be no danger, for several of the Established Clergy here [*i.e.* in Bedfordshire] are in, and some few of the University and Kirk of Scotland. If, however, when ye meet . . . ye all advise me not to print Subscribers, perhaps I may listen. As to what money N[inian] N[iving] and you have collected, ye may either retain it in your own hands, or else lodge it at Edinburgh in the hands of Mr. Andrew Chalmers, Writer there.”

In the end a list of over 200 subscribers was secured and printed. In it appeared the names of the following persons, familiar to the readers of these pages :—

*Bishops*—Alexander, Falconar, Raitt, White, Keith, and Dunbar.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gordon’s MSS.

*Clergy*—Bell, Crombie, Drummond, Douglas, Erskine, Edgar, Forbes, Guthrie, Gerard, Hill, Innes, Lyon (Perth), Niving, Ramsay, Seton.

*Laity*—Dr. Carmichael of Perth ; Thos. Drummond of Logie-Almond (who wrote the verses on Bishop Rattray's death) ; John Graeme of Balgowan, Lord Nairne, Lord Stormont, Dr. Stirling (Perth).

(2) Passing now from the subject of the Scottish Office, we will end the Chapter with a notice of a Harvest Thanksgiving, ordered by Bishop Alexander throughout his Diocese :—<sup>1</sup>

“ At Memus the 15th Day of Nov., 1743.

“ The Clergy of the District of Dunkeld, Perth, etc., being met to gether . . . taking under consideration a Letter of the Right Rev. Mr. John Alexander, our Ordinary, wherein he recommends the 20th Instant (being 25th Sunday after Trinity) to be observed by the Clergy and People of his District as a Day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God for His infinite goodness to us of this Land in the plentiful Crop and gracious Season for ripening and reaping the same, indulged us by his Bounty, Acknowledging ourselves highly indebted to our R.R. Ordinary for his provident Care of all our Concerns and unanimously agree to the observance of the said Day as Day of Thanksgiving and are to use the following as the Collect, Psalms, and Lessons for the same Day.

*The Collect.* O Lord God of our Salvation, who hast been exceedingly gracious unto this Land and by thy Blessing upon the Seasons and Labours of the Field, hast given us an abundant increase of the Fruits of the Earth and provided us Plenty of Food, both for Man and Beast, to the great Comfort and Joy of our Hearts. We are here now before Thee with all due Thankfulness to acknowledge thine unspeakable goodness in granting us such mild and favourable Weather for ripening and reaping the Fruits of the Earth in safety and abundance and to offer up our Sacrifice of Praise for the same unto thy great and glorious Name, humbly beseeching thee to accept this unfeigned, though unworthy, Oblation of ourselves, our Souls and Bodies to be a living Sacrifice unto thee. . . . (Through) Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Blessed Spirit of Grace by us and all the World all Glory, Honour, and Praise now and for ever, *Amen.*

Proper Psalms, Forenoon 33, 34, 65. Afternoon 104.

1st Lesson, Deut. xxviii. to 15. 2nd Lesson, S. John vi. to 15.

For the Epistle Joel ii. 13-28. Gospel S. Matt. xxv. 32.

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

## CHAPTER XII.

1746-1759. *After Culloden—"Various Disasters through the District and Alibi"* (R. Lyon to Bishop Alexander).

*But Scotland lang shall rue the day  
She saw her flag sae fiercely flee:  
Culloden Hills were hills o' wae—  
It was an awfu' mornin'.*

It will be assumed here, without further enlargement, that the reader understands the bearings of the battle of Culloden, which was fought on April 8th, 1746.

This at once sets us free to record how the catastrophe affected Bishop Alexander and his Diocese.

### I.

The first period after the end of the civil war was characterized by the inhuman cruelties of the victor, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland. The present Lord Roseberry (1914) describes<sup>1</sup> him as "the slave of violent passions" and adds:—

"Success in battle was destined to develop the worst phase of his character, *i.e.* a brutal disregard of all the dictates of justice and common humanity, when dealing with a brave but vanquished enemy. No blacker, no bloodier page will be found in the history of any country than that, which records the atrocities perpetrated at Culloden at the command and under the eye of a British Monarch's<sup>2</sup> son."

And, since that is the deliberate opinion of so eminent a modern Statesman and Historian on the "Liberal" side of politics, it enables us to accept the following general account of matters given by one of Bishop Alexander's Clergy, *i.e.* the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth, as not unduly exaggerated:—<sup>3</sup>

"The Church of Scotland is now, alas! devoted in the intention of her adversaries to utter destruction, which I fervently pray God to prevent. Her oratories have been profaned and burnt, her holy altars desecrated, her priests

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the List of Persons concerned in the Rebellion.

<sup>2</sup> "With us English he never chose to be familiar. He was always going back to Hanover."—Thackeray's *Four Georges*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Hist. Perth*, 169-70.

outrageously plundered, deprived and some of them imprisoned and treated with uncommon cruelty, her faithful members almost deprived of the means of Salvation, and this mostly done without a form of law by a hostile force especially appointed by him, who calls himself the Duke of Cumberland, and who (God grant him a timely repentance and forgive him!) has occasioned the painful and untimely death of many innocent and inoffensive persons, and by wilful fire and sword and by every means of torment, distress and barbarity, exceeding Glencoe's massacre itself, has brought a dreadful desolation on my dear country."

The writer of the above words himself became one of the royal "Butcher's" victims, and we proceed to narrate his story.

In the Spring of 1745 his movements became mysterious even to his trusted friends. Thus on March 30th, the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill wrote<sup>1</sup> as follows to the Bishop concerning him:—

"R.L.'s enclosed Letter came to my Hands this day in one to myself, by which he tells me that he hopes to satisfy me at meeting how he came to be two nights at Drummond Castle last week without seeing me. I shall not pass a hasty Sentence against him, but I should think his excuse would need to be pretty relevant."

The fact evidently was that the Prince<sup>2</sup> had resolved that his army should behave with restraint and humanity and one obvious means of obtaining this end was to enlist the services of loyal Chaplains of good character. Now Mr. Lyon assuredly came under that head, and it seems pretty clear that Lord Ogilvy's purpose in bringing him to Drummond Castle on the errand which puzzled Mr. Erskine so much was to induce him to follow the Jacobite army, when the time should come, in the capacity of a Chaplain.

In this, that Officer was successful. Mr. Lyon himself tells us that it was in response to the prayers of many that he entered upon the risky undertaking. Perhaps it was represented to him that it was safe for him to do so, inasmuch as, "thinking it inconsistent with his sacred Character," he neither intended to, nor did he, bear arms, but only lent his aid in maintaining those principles of order and humanity which marked the conduct of the Prince's troops.

The date at which he actually joined the forces has not been ascertained, but it is certain that Charles entered Perth on Sept. 3rd, 1745,<sup>3</sup> and in doing so received an enthusiastic public welcome, and that he attended "Episcopal" worship, conducted by the

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Chest*, 597.

<sup>2</sup> *Grub*. p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *Marshall's Hist. of Perth*, p. 282.

Rev. Mr. Armstrong, in the Middle Kirk on Sunday, Sept. 8th. This is certainly the likely time for our eager Presbyter to have taken the plunge. It is recorded indeed that, after the Prince had marched south and gained the victory of Prestonpans, near Edinburgh, there were great rejoicings in the Fair City and "the windows of Mr. Lyon's house were illuminated, and the letters C.P.R. (Charles Prince Regent) in large Characters, with lights shining through them," but that may imply no more than that he waited behind for a little, or that though he was at Prestonpans with the Army, he had left directions with his sister Cicely as to what to do in case of victory. The following extract from a letter addressed on Jan. 6th, 1746, to the Bishop, shews us that he did leave Perth about this time :—

"I know not, R.R. Sir, if Mr. Lyon acquainted you, ere he left us, but he never so much as signified to one of his Congregation and we are now but Indifferently off. I think we deserved better treatment from him."

No account of his actual arrest after the great catastrophe survives, but somewhere he fell into the hands of the victorious Hanoverian forces. When the trial came on at Carlisle, he "was forced," he says, "by surprise and the advice of his counsel" to confess the part he had taken in the campaign. "Upon which," he continues, "my pretended Judges declared, and the Jury found me guilty of high treason and levying war" and he was accordingly sentenced to be executed at Penrith on Oct. 28th. Before that date he composed two long documents, the one a letter of farewell to his friends, and the other a speech to be delivered on the scaffold. The Primus and Bishop Alexander, with commendable courage, ran the risk involved in writing him a sympathetic letter of consolation<sup>1</sup> and, after celebrating the Holy Communion for 50 out of his 77 condemned fellow-prisoners, he was led with them to the scaffold, where they were each hanged for three minutes and then disembowelled.

Some of the sawdust was collected by sorrowing friends and preserved as a relic. The speech too, was eagerly asked for. Thus on Dec. 3rd, 1746, the Rev. A. Livingstone, writing to Bishop Alexander, said :—

"I hear you have got a copy of Mr. Lyon's Speech. If you would be so good as to send it by the Bearer, I would take a Double and return you it safely."

In the letter to the Bishop, dated Dec. 7th, Dr. Stirling gives us a glimpse of the pathetic figure of the victim's Mother :—

"Poor Mrs. Lyon (he says) the good Woman bears her loss and affliction like a good Christian and better than could have been expected. Her loss, poor Woman, is very great. God support her under it !"

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Chest. MSS.*    *Ep. Hist. Perth*, 179.

And we may leave the incident with a quotation from a letter, dated Dec. 29th, 1747, from the Rev. Robert Lyon of Stretton to Bishop Alexander :—

“ I hope Robert Lyon’s Mother is above want several degrees. Laurence Dundass left them a Legacy of some hundreds and I know she was in the highest Class of the Fund, which helps always somewhat. Please put into that Lottery for me 20 sh.”

To the boundless joy of the Whig inhabitants, the Duke of Cumberland at the head of 5000 German troops entered the City Feb. 6, 1746,<sup>1</sup> on his way north, and encamped on the N. Inch. Detachments of his soldiers were sent out to plunder and lay waste the lands of all the Jacobite families in the neighbourhood, and the following advertizement was published by tuck of drum round the town on Feb. 7th and 8th, 1746 :—

“ By Order of H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland. Any Person, who within the Town or Liberty of this place shall conceal any Rebell or Arms, ammunition or anything else belonging to the Rebels, and shall not immediately bring in the said Rebel or stores or goods to Provost James Crie, shall, upon proof of disobedience to this Order, be hanged.”

The Perth Tolbooth also was turned into a veritable “ Black Hole of Calcutta,” where 79 wretched prisoners, of whom more than a dozen are known to have been “ Episcopalians,” were crammed into cells designed to hold a much smaller number.

## II.

Thus did the savagery, which was now going on, reach into Bishop Alexander’s Diocese, and strike one of his Priests in its most terrible form. How did it fare with the destruction of their Chapels and Meeting Houses, which was being actively proceeded with at the same time? The line of Cumberland’s march was everywhere marked by the flames of the “ Episcopal ” places of worship.<sup>2</sup> We shall not attempt to investigate the case as it affected the whole of Scotland, but the following instances may be mentioned. On July 29th, 1746, the two neighbouring Chapels of Longside and Old Deer in Aberdeenshire could be seen from a neighbouring hill-top burning at once and “ the lady of rank,” who had set the law in motion, might be heard exclaiming in glee, “ Haud in the Prayer Books ! ” and “ The wark o’ Guid gangs bonnily on ! ”<sup>3</sup> On August 15th, Bishop Alexander’s brother-in-law, Mr. Colin Petrie, wrote from Forge :—<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marshall’s *Hist. of Perth*, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> *Grub.* IV. 34. *T.S.* IV. 323. *Lawson* II. 291. *C.’s Ch. in Moray*, p. 118. *Epochs* 128.

<sup>3</sup> W.’s *Skinner of Linshart*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *C.’s Moray*, 123.

"All our meetings are burnt; the one at Huntly continues unmolested, but all within it was burnt."

In Stonehaven, the Duke ordered his soldiers to set fire to the "Episcopal" Chapel, and those at Muchalls and Drumlithie were razed to the ground.<sup>1</sup>

As the devastating host kept drawing southward from their northern victory, the alarm in Bishop Alexander's Diocese must have kept growing more and more extreme. And that these forebodings were not belied is shewn by the following extracts:—

On May 20th, 1746, the Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie made this entry in his *Session Book*:—

"This day the Meeting House at Blairgowrie was demolished by a party of Irish Dragons."

Writing to the Bishop from Restenneth, on Sept. 8th, the Rev. David Guthrie said:—<sup>2</sup>

"The Houses of Prayer are quite demolished, plundered, and burnt through all this country and (which is much more lamentable) the People all gone to the Kirk. I am exceedingly puzzled how to deal with some of them who want to have their children baptized, but will hardly promise to adhere to the Church."

We wish Mr. Guthrie had named the Chapels individually. It seems natural to infer that his own was amongst them. His neighbour, Dean Seton at Forfar, informed the Bishop on Sept. 9th that his "Meeting House was closed on Aprile 2nd," and it seems hardly likely that, after Mr. Lyon's execution as a rebel, his Chapel at Perth would be spared by those in command of the Irish Dragoons, who demolished the Blairgowrie Meeting House. Certainly the Perth Congregation appears as *minus* a Meeting House a few years later. As for the rest in the Diocese, there is no particular information, and we must remain content with Mr. Guthrie's general statement.

Cupar-Fife and Dunfermline were not in Bishop Alexander's Diocese, but since they have become familiar to us in the course of this narrative, and the following account of the fate of their Meeting Houses was addressed on June 21st by our friend, the Rev. A. Livingstone, to the Bishop, we reproduce it here:—

"The more immedeat occa'n of our Sufferings was the destruction of our Bishop's [*i.e.* Bishop White's] Meeting House [*i.e.* at Cupar Fife], the roof and floors whereof were quite broke down and all the Furniture of it burnt in the streets by a military force, the sure accounts whereof and sacking of this place so alarmed the Proprietor of our Meeting House [*i.e.* at Dunfermline] that he obliged us to

<sup>1</sup> T.S. 323-4.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gordon's MSS.

abandon it and remove the Seats, which no sooner began to appear in the Street than the Mob got up and broke some of them, nay and every bit of them would have been broke or burnt had it not been timeously prevented. The strongest measures were thundered out against us by an Officer of the Army about four miles from this that if public Worship were not wholly given up and our House stripped of its furniture, he would reduce it to ashes, nay and this whole Town. This, together with the Solicitation of my Hearers obliged me to desist from Worship last Lord's Day, as I must do for some time after, till it shall please God to afford us some peace and quiet. I hear that the Meeting House at Stirling was shut up."

This last report is confirmed by a letter written by the Rev. Ninian Niving of Torbrex, near Stirling, on June 16th.

Even as late as Feb. 25th, 1759, the Clergy were not safe from having their Chapels demolished, for on that date Mr. Skene wrote to the Bishop:—

"As for Mr. Crombie I wrote to him twice . . . begging him he would do me the Favour as send me a particular Account of the Destroying of his Meeting House at Aylith, by whom, by whose order and on what day of the month."

### III.

Then followed the Penal Legislation :

"As soon as possible after Culloden an Act was passed which required every Episcopal Clergyman to take the oaths of abjuration and allegiance to King George, to pray for His Majesty by name in Church, and to register his own letters of Orders by Sept. 1st, 1746. . . . Only five Clergy complied in the whole Church. . . . In the next Act, that of 1748 [which the English Bishops opposed in a body in the House of Lords<sup>1</sup>], their Orders were wholly ignored. No Episcopal Orders were recognised in Scotland, save those of an English, or Irish, Bishop and the Non-juring Clergy were in the matter of worship restricted more than even an ordinary layman. They were prohibited from acting as domestic Chaplains and from conducting worship, even to the limited number of four persons and the family in any house except their own. It was not possible to carry repression further. This Act, in fact amounted to a practical inhibition of public worship."<sup>2</sup>

We can trace the working of it in ten of the charges, over which Bishop Alexander presided:—

<sup>1</sup> *Grub.* p. 38. T.S. p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> *Epochs* 129-30.

(1) *Alloa*. In his letter of June 21st, 1746, Mr. Livingstone gives us a glimpse into the state of things in the Bishop's own charge:—

“From what I can learn, no Clergyman in the Nation has public Worship but yourself, which I wish you and your Congregation may long enjoy, but I'm afraid you'll undergo the Fate of others. I wish you doe not too much expose yourself, for the violence of our Enemies rages most furiously. . . . After writing as above, I'm informed that you also have desisted from public Worship and delivered up the keys of your Meeting House to your Baillie (?) but I shall not believe this till I have it from yourself in some of the circumstances of the matter. Is there no possible way of our having ane Intercourse? But this I leave to yourself.” “Since you don't incline we should correspond either by post or public carrier, I hope it will be neither hazardous nor chargeable to write you by the accidental but sure bearer, Mrs. Kettles (?), by whom I had your last containing an ample character of her, which, by what I can yet perceive, she very justly deserves. I have already experienced her discreet and obliging disposition in several instances. I'll be fond to hear from you by her with an account of your present situation in these dismall days of persecution, wherein I am a sharer with most, if not all my Brethren in this District.”

On Oct. 17th, 1748, the Bishop wrote to the Primus:—

“I gladly accept Furlough till the Spring: [I] shall be on my guard against Dragoons.”

The next glimpse of the Bishop under these circumstances is given us on Aug. 17th, 1750, again by Mr. Livingstone:—

“I was obliged then to be at Edinburgh where I mett the surprising news of a strong Information<sup>1</sup> being laid against you [*i.e.* the Bishop] in Kincaid's hands in order to be printed, but this Design was got put off last week, and I hope shall be so still. I understood you was write to by a friend at Edinburgh very timeously, and a copy of the Information sent you. How true or false the Charge was, you are the properest hand to inform your friends. Meantime the story made a great noise at Edinburgh for some days, and put our friends, particularly the Brethren, in a great Concern on account of the Consequences that might ensue, insomuch that some of the latter had a mind to retrench their numbers Sunday last; but a more full and distinct accôunt of this matter I refer to others, who are

<sup>1</sup> Probably in consequence of the Ardceanchrocan Confirmation, for which see (11) of this Section.

more capable to inform you. A true zeal and heroic Courage are no doubt commendable, but the wisdom of the Serpent is no less necessary. I say no more, but heartily to wish that every one of us may so demean our Selves in our present Suffering State that we may not be instruments of bringing further Persecution upon our poor afflicted Church."

(2) *Ardrie-Dynat*. Mr. George Robertson "Episcopal Minister," was committed to Perth Tolbooth after the '45.

(3) *Blair Athol*. The Rev. Walter Stewart, who had been settled in this charge on Oct. 29, 1728, was apprehended and brought to Perth by the Sheriff-depute<sup>1</sup> but was released on bail. His trial before the same Magistrate took place on Dec. 28th, 1756, and he was charged with the heinous offence of having performed Divine Service in his own house every Sunday from Christmas, 1755, to October, 1756, or on one or another of those Sundays, when more than four persons were present besides his own family, and craving that the penalties of the Act 19, George II., should be inflicted. Mr. Stewart confessed the charge, and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, during which his Meeting House was to be shut up. He was accordingly committed to the gaol of Perth, and, as he was in his 70th year and because it was the prison, confinement in which had appeared to the Presbytery in 1748<sup>2</sup> to be equivalent to a sentence of death for an old man, his friends very naturally dreaded the consequences of such a punishment for him. Four of Mr. Stewart's hearers were also indicted for being present, and not giving information. They confessed, and were fined £5 each. One of them was a notary public, and he was declared to have forfeited his office, and to be incapable of bearing any office, civil or military, for twelve months.<sup>3</sup>

(4) *Blairgowrie*. As has been already related, the Meeting House here was destroyed by Irish Dragoons on May 20th, 1746. After that date, the Rev. J. Hill went on officiating according to his opportunities, and his *Session Book* contains notes of all the services held by him.

The entry on Sept. 1st, 1746, is to the following effect:—

"The Act against Nonjurors in Scotland took place, which restricted the number of hearers to four besides the family, in which the Non-juring Clergyman officiated."

While this earlier Act ruled the situation, he kept within its provisions by holding Service every Sunday in one or another of the private houses in the neighbourhood.

<sup>1</sup> L. p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> See below (10).

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Hist. Perth*, 195-6.

On Sept. 29th, 1748, however, his note is :—

“ An Act made against the Nonjurors in Scotland took place this day prohibiting every Nonjuring Clergyman from performing any Divine Office except in their own families, in consequence of which *I officiated only in my own house [i.e. Whitelock] and to four persons at a time.*”

And so we see him cruelly hampered in the discharge of his pastoral labours during this dark, penal period.

(5) *Carsebank*. In Section II. of this chapter we have recorded the Rev. D. Guthrie's witness as to the destruction of Chapels in the neighbourhood. There is nothing definite to add about his experience under the penal laws except that he and his flock were thrown into a state of trepidation in the autumn of 1750 by the arrest of Mr. Edgar in Arbroath and his trial in Forfar, and the subsequent activity of the soldiers in the neighbourhood.

Although it is straying into the political region, the present writer will perhaps be excused if he here records that his ancestor, the Laird of Pitscandly, the mansion-house of which is situated not more than half-a-mile from Mr. Guthrie's residence at Restenneth, was sentenced to forfeiture of his estate and banishment for following Prince Charlie. On its being proved, however, that Pitscandly belonged to his wife, the former part of the sentence fell through.<sup>1</sup>

(6) *Forfar*. Some interesting information concerning this charge has survived.

The constant tradition as to the conduct of public worship here during the present period has been embodied in the following extract from the local historian :—<sup>2</sup>

“ The building in which the Church of S. John's had its origin, is situated at 131 East High Street, Forfar, and bears date 1741. It was built and owned by Baillie Charles Webster, believed to be a member of the then Congregation. It was not occupied as a ‘ Meeting House ’ until after the great Jacobite Rising of 1745. The method of worship was most interesting, and proved the loyalty of the then members of the Church. Holes were pierced in the ‘ trance ’ or lobby for the purpose of enabling those in attendance to take part in the Service, while the officiating Clergyman stood either in the lobby or on the top of the stair and read the lessons, etc. The exact spots where the holes referred to were made can be pointed out to this day by the occupants of the house.”

<sup>1</sup> Pitscandly MS.

<sup>2</sup> Dill. p. 19.

Writing on Sept. 9th, 1746, to Bishop Alexander,<sup>1</sup> Dean Seton after stating that his Meeting House, which would probably be that which was in use before the humble edifice just described, had been forcibly closed, continues :—

“ My person was seized and carried to Montrose May 17th ; my Cabinet was searched and all my papers carried off ; soon after my Confinement my books were smuggled away by my friends who were afraid of their being carried off by the Governing Officer here, some of them are damaged and others lost and I was not restored to freedom till Aug. 27th, though there was nothing to be alleged against me, except a mistaken notion taken up either ignorantly or maliciously of a Sermon I preached in Lent upon Jer. iv. 4-7 : [this text was curiously prophetic of what was now actually happening :—*I will bring evil from the north and a great destruction. The lion is come up from his thicket and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way ; he is gone up from his place to make the land desolate. For this, gird you with sack-cloth, lament, and howl.*] And, to compleat my misfortune, I find my Congregation have all joined the prevailing party, save six or eight women. In a word, I have nothing to do but to mourn in secret for the dismal ruins of our Church and calamities of our native Country, where I may live and die retired from the World, whereof I have no pleasure, and in which I can be no longer useful. My brethren here are in the same situation with me.”

On the previous day, *i.e.* Sept. 8th, the Rev. Wm. Erskine, of Muthill, passed through Forfar, and, as he informed the Bishop :

“ I saw Messrs. Seton and Guthrie at Restennet, the former having been at liberty a fortnight.”

But the survival of another of Dean Seton's letters, addressed to the Bishop (Jan. 1st, 1750) shows that the Church in Forfar was now called upon to suffer, not only from the severe administration of the penal laws, but also from the English Qualified schism, which it was part of the hostile legislation's object to foster. The beginning and part of the middle of the MS. is much torn ; we begin where it reads more or less continuously :—

“ The last deluge, which I take to be . . . owing to those Qualified Gentlemen who are setting up amongst us, with whom the Presbyterian Teachers are more alarmed and disgusted than ever they were with any of us [*i.e.* *Scottish Episcopalians*] for they [*i.e.* the English Qualified Clergy] not only hustle and browbeat them [*i.e.* the Presbyterian Ministers] openly, but in process of time may turn them quite out of Character and of Business (such a settled

aversion have people of all ranks to Presbytery), yea, and make out a legal Establishment upon a Revolution footing, viz. :—*The Inclinations of the People.*

I have had to do with one of the most spytful Colleagues [*i.e.* English Qualified] in these Bounds, of whose Value I have had repeated instances, but now he begins to relent, and, though he threatened long before Christmas, and told our Provost that he would stand Informer against me, yet, finding that he could not break my measures I had laid down to be taken at that Festival . . . he said afterwards that he was only in Jest and really designed me no Disturbance."

Who was this "spytful Colleague?" We are able to name him, because Dean Seton's successor (whose settlement in Forfar will be described in due course) declared on Feb. 25, 1759, that he, too, had a "Colleague" in the town, whose conduct was certainly very "spytful" and that his name was "Mess. Jo. Keir." This worthy, we discover from a letter written by the Rev. J. Hill to the Bishop on July 16th, 1759, supported himself by keeping a school.

Resuming, however, Dean Seton's letter of Jan. 15th, 1750, we learn that not only our Forfar Church people but also those of Brechin were troubled with the English Qualified Schism, for he goes on :—

"When I had wrote thus far, I was interrupted with a letter from Mr. Ogilvie of Kinaltie<sup>1</sup> his Burial, who died Friday last, to the great loss of his People. 'Tis true the Magistrates of Brechin have called a Qualified Clergyman (who is in Deacon's Orders by the Bishop of Gloucester), and engaged with him only for a year, but I have reason to believe that it was with a Design to procure further Liberty to Mr. Ogilvy; wherein they were so successful that I'm told Mr. Blair, the Presbyterian Preacher there, went to Mr. Ogilvy and entreated him to keep back his Congregation from that Rascal [*i.e.* the English Deacon] with assurances that he would meet with indulgences in his Ministrations to them. Thus God, who brings good out of evil, may make these very men, who design to swallow us up, prove the instruments of our good and prosperity."

At the end of the same year, *i.e.* Nov. 16th, 1750, we find from letters addressed by the Rev. John Ramsay of Memus, and the Rev. A. Livingstone of Dunfermline, that the unfortunate Church people of Forfar had fresh cause for consternation. After some opening preliminaries, Mr. Ramsay wrote :—

<sup>1</sup> See Ch. XI. "Forfar."

“Before I returned to Angus, there was a most unlucky affair happened at Arbroath with Mr. Edgar. It was this: some of the Military had been there for some time, and differed with the Magistrates, which is given for the reason of Mr. Edgar’s Trouble. The way they took to ensnare him was most subtle: they sent a Soldier to his house, who earnestly importuned Mr. Edgar for Prayers, who was so easy as to yield to his Request. It seems the Soldier thought that Mr. Edgar exceeded the Numbers, went directly to the Officer and informed. Upon which the Officer wrote to General Churchill, who sent the Information to London, which was returned with peremptory Orders to prosecute the Clergyman forthwith. Accordingly he was tried at Forfar before Carsegownie. The Witnesses adduced at the Trial were the Soldier, who had been the hearer; an old Chelsea Pensioner, and a common man in Arbroath—in all, three. . . . None of the witnesses, except the Soldier, swore to the Lybel; upon which the Sheriff assolized (sic) Mr. Edgar with a Caution to be on his guard for the future, for had the Lybel been proven, the Judge behoved to have condemned ye Panel. . . . It is the substance of the whole affair which we have reason to be thankful turned out so lucky for Mr. Edgar; for, had he been brought in, it’s a question where it would have ended.”

So far as Forfar, where the trial took place, was concerned, the result was that in view of what had happened even after the Law had been in force for two and a half years, Mr. Seton dared not minister to more than four people at a time. It is no wonder that he hit upon the expedient for evading the Law already described at 131 East High Street! As for Mr. Edgar, he does not seem to have got quite so easily off as Mr. Ramsay supposed, for on July 6th, 1753, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote thus to the Bishop:

“God grant Persecution may cease, if it be His Will. If not, His Will be done. His grace is all-sufficient. Meantime I wonder what has become of Henry Edgar.”

And as late as Jan. 17th, 1754, he again wrote to the Bishop:—

“I am concerned for honest Henry Edgar and humbly commend him to God and His Grace.”

Another record of these persecuting days in Forfar is preserved in the Minutes of the Town Council.<sup>1</sup> On Sept. 30th, 1754, a meeting of that body was held, at which:—

“Provost William Brown in the chair, Councillor James Ramsay was disqualified from voting owing to his having been twice, within the year preceding, in attendance at a

<sup>1</sup> Dill. p. 24.

Non-jurant meeting, or had heard Worship from one or other of these People.”

And there is still another in connection with the Dean's successor, the Rev. G. Skene, for on March 29th, 1759, Dean Guthrie wrote to the Bishop :—

“ I am very concerned that Mr. Ker is threatening to prosecute Mr. Skene, and has several times insulted the Magistrates for their lenity towards him.”

On Feb. 25th of the same year, Mr. Skene himself had written :

“ Having gone out last night to call on a distressed Man, though none of my Charge, but an obliging and peaceable Neighbour, my Colleague, Mess. Jo. Ker, popped in and attacked me in a very odd manner, even with the Pride of Lucifer and the teeth of a Tyger. Having, it seems, seen some of my People going from Prayers on Sunday last, he threatened to my face to prosecute me ; but, seeing the man transported into a Passion, I made him no Return but retired and I understand since, he has been speaking big words, but I thank God I am not afraid at these ! ”<sup>1</sup>

(7) *Kirriemuir*. The Rev. William Gray, who is mentioned in the *Dunkeld Register* for the last time at the Ordination of the Rev. Charles Rose, on April 30th, 1745, appears to have survived the Jacobite collapse. We may take it that the complete obscurity into which he thereafter falls, is the effect of his endeavours to attract as little public notice as possible during this time of persecution. He seems, however, to have died, or at least left Kirriemuir, before many years had passed.

For on March 15th, 1751, Mr. William Walker was ordained Deacon, and on March 14th, 1752, Priest, “for Kirriemuir,”<sup>2</sup> by Bishop Alexander. One of his letters,<sup>3</sup> written apparently about the year 1755, just enables us to catch a glimpse of his charge during the acute stage of the administration of the penal laws. What he says to the Bishop is as follows :—

“ We are greatly alarmed at Mr. C[onachar's] affair<sup>4</sup> and I beg you'll be so good as let us have a particular account of it, together with your Directions, how we shall behave in cases of like nature. You know, I hope, that I have nothing timorous about me but upon such an Emergency I thought I was obliged to give you this Trouble.”

<sup>1</sup> For another similar instance of Mr. Ker's conduct, see Ch. XIV. (10).

<sup>2</sup> D. R.

<sup>3</sup> C.'s *Argyle*, p. 219.

<sup>4</sup> See below (12).

And it is likely that he was one of those Clergy who kept his people together by reading the Service, as he stood in a passage, while each of the adjacent rooms was occupied by the legal number of persons, for the historian Lawson says :—<sup>1</sup>

“ The noble family of Airlie in Forfarshire [near Kirriemuir] particularly distinguished themselves by affording such facilities to evade the enactment by keeping the people together and regularly celebrating divine worship.”

(8) *Memus*. The Rev. John Ramsay of Memus, in a letter addressed to the Bishop on Nov. 16th, 1750, after giving an account of the Arbroath alarm, goes on to say :—

“ This has given no small uneasiness to all of us here. . . . For myself, I use some more freedom, as being at a Distance from these Civil, I had almost said Uncivil, Neighbours, none of them being nearer than Kirriemuir.”

(9) *Nairne*. On July 20th, 1746, the Rev. W. Abernethy wrote thus to the Bishop :—

“ I want much to have your advice in this troublesome World with respect to the duties of my Office. To have public prayers is, I believe, impracticable without incurring the greatest Penalty, and I wish the Act we're threatened with may not even prohibit private Prayers by a Clergyman. 'Tis a pity we can't perform our duty to our God, . . . as we never meddle with public affairs in our Prayers or Sermons.”<sup>2</sup>

On Oct. 28th, he wrote again :—

“ I make no doubt of being persecuted by Mr. Millar.”

As Mr. Millar had taken an active part against the unfortunate Mr. Lyon, prosecution by him was no pleasant prospect !

(10) *Perth*. I have given a full account of the events of this period in the Fair City in my *Episcopal History of Perth*, chapters XX. and XXI., and it would be to the point to repeat it all here. Since, however, it fills nearly 30 pages there, it is too long for complete reproduction here. Still this record would be incomplete if any of the Congregations concerning which information survives were to be omitted, and, therefore, some typical extracts follow from the letters<sup>3</sup> of the Rev. George Innes, who (as will be seen in the next chapter) succeeded the Rev. Laurence Drummond and the Rev. Robert Lyon. On July 20th, 1752, he wrote to the Bishop :—

<sup>1</sup> p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> That made a difference between the conduct of the Non-jurors and the Covenanters.

<sup>3</sup> MS. lent by Rev. W. Hawdon.

" My alarms grow upon me. I have had no peace since S—t came here, which is now some more than four weeks ago. In order to frighten my People, he gives out that he will have every one of them sworn, whether they have seen me transgress the Law, and too many are weak enough to believe he can and will do so. He has, I am told, joined with some of [?] to surprise me and yesterday was the time appointed for the revengeful malice. But, thanks be to God, He has hitherto protected me, and, I trust, will do it. The Design of these mine enemies is to terrify my People, so as to make them leave me, or to make my life so uneasy as to make me leave this place . . . and truly they have reduced me to a very disagreeable situation. The generality of my People are giddy, and so thoughtless as to tell me that, if I do not give them Preaching and Singing, they must go elsewhere. In the end I generally humour them, which gives me no small fatigue, as it obliges me to run such risks, as I am at present really unwilling to do."

On Aug. 11th, he continued :—

" My situation deserves to be pitied. This last alarm frightens many who slighted the former. I have great reason to fear that Precognitions will be taken here, and then I know my fate. What shall I do? How shall I behave? If I keep to the legal number, I am sure more of my people will leave me. If I exceed I must go to prison. Hard dilemma! Both horns wound! I pray God, who alone can do it, would speedily deliver me out of these straits, and in the meantime direct me to that which is right and proper!"

And in the late Spring of 1755, he wrote :—

" Though my folk promised to you to take a House [*i.e.* a Meeting House, which certainly looks as if Cumberland had destroyed their former one], or at least to assist me in taking one, yet now, when it's come to the push, they will do nothing. A shadow frights them at any time, and now this story [told in (12)] is turned into a bugbear and makes them tremble though, if there be a danger, it's only I must suffer."

As we have seen, the Rev. George Sempill was in rebellion against the Bishop. He had not, however, " qualified " by taking the oaths, and was still therefore a Scottish Nonjuror, occupying the position not of the " English," independent congregations, but that assumed by the Rev. David Fyffe and the Edinburgh dissentients. Accordingly he was treated by the Law as a " Scottish " Episcopalian " :—

"In<sup>1</sup> December, 1747, four soldiers rushed suddenly into a room in Perth, in which the Rev. George Sempill was performing Divine Service, and, finding his audience more numerous than the Law allowed, they secured him. He was carried before the Magistrates on the following day and committed to prison for six months, in terms of the Act. The persons present were also cited to appear, and to pay their fine of £5 each; but they proved that they had given information within proper time and were assoilzied."

It has to be admitted in this case that when the Presbytery discovered that their victim was an old man, they successfully used their influence to have him removed to a more wholesome place of confinement than the Perth Tolbooth. They did not, however, attempt to obtain this mitigation for the Rev. Walter Stewart of Athol, whose case, except that he was loyal to the Bishop, was exactly the same as that of Mr. Sempill.

That completes the knowledge at our disposal in the present connection with the Diocese of Dunkeld. We proceed, therefore, to the *Diocese of Dunblane* :—

(11) *Doune*. No information concerning the working of the penal laws in the Congregation of Doune itself has been discovered, but the Rev. John Blair was slightly connected with an incident which made some stir at this time. On March 23rd, 1750, the Rev. John Conacher of Gartmore wrote to the Bishop :—

"Mr. Blair, I expect, will be so good as attend you the Length [*i.e.* to Mr. Conacher's] . . . I wrote to (him) to let you know whether he can wait on you or not."

The purpose of the Bishop's coming was to confirm some candidates prepared by Mr. Conacher, and, as will be seen from a letter of May 7th, 1750, addressed by Mr. Blair to the Bishop, and reproduced in the next paragraph, this Confirmation nearly brought those who took part in it into serious trouble.

(12) *Gartmore*. It will be remembered that amongst the Clergy of Dunblane, the oversight of whom fell to Bishop Alexander at the Episcopal Synod of 1743, was the Rev. John Conacher, who resided at Gartmore near Doune, but evidently exercised his Ministry westwards beyond the limits of the Diocese of Dunblane. Although we have seen him rebuked by Bishop White in the Diocesan Synod for marrying a couple without previous proclamation of banns, yet he was a man "of irreproachable character and considerable attainments."<sup>2</sup>

He was a most enthusiastic Jacobite. It can be of none other than of him that Lawson<sup>3</sup> tells the following story :—

<sup>1</sup> L. 294.

<sup>2</sup> *Grub.* IV. p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> p. 288.

“ After the battle of Prestonpans (Sept. 19, 1745) one Episcopal Clergyman immediately set out (*i.e.* on Saturday) on foot for the scene of his ministrations beyond Doune, a distance of at least 70 miles from the field of action and . . . arrived in time on Sunday to announce [the victory] to his flock at the ordinary hour for Divine Service.”

On two occasions, we are not surprised to learn, he came in contact with the penal laws. On the first he escaped with nothing worse than threatenings but in the second, as we shall see, he got into very serious trouble.

(1) The earlier of the two difficulties arose about a Confirmation.<sup>1</sup> He was fearlessly trying to keep his flock together by means of field-meetings. As Lawson says :—<sup>2</sup>

“ At times . . . pastor and people met in the recesses of woods, in secluded glens, and on the sides of sequestered mountains, when the vault of heaven was their covering, the moss turfs their humble altar, and perhaps a solitary seat their pulpit.”

Even under those difficult circumstances, his teaching was with such power that it led some of his hearers to ask for Confirmation. This appears from the following letter addressed by him to the Bishop :—

“ *Gartclach*,<sup>3</sup> March 20th, 1750. Right Reverend, Though I had intended long ago to have done myself the honour of waiting on you, yet, as I have been very little at home since I wrote you last, discharging the different parts of my holy Function in far distant places, *not being at liberty as formerly to make open appointments with my people*, I beg to be Excused.

[I] have sent the Bearer, as directed in your last to know when it will consist with your Conveniency to come to Ardceanchrocan, which I would have done some time ago, had not the Weather been so bad ; however hope a few good days will dry the Roads and Mr. Blair, I expect, will be so good as attend you the Length, and, if you please, I shall meet you at Down and see you safely home back again. I refer to yourself to judge whether its proper to be with us on a Sunday, for we meet with no trouble, *though we have field Meetings*. . . . I need use no argument to hasten your coming, but that many will now be soon going to herd.”

<sup>1</sup> See *C's Argyle*, 198, etc., and T.C. MSS.

<sup>2</sup> p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> Within the frontier of the Diocese of Glasgow.

The last sentence conveys the impression that those from whom the candidates were drawn belonged to the crofter class. However that may be, the Confirmation was so largely attended that the Kirk took alarm. That appears from the following letter from the Rev. John Blair to the Bishop :—

“ *Down, 7th May, 1750.* Mr. Conacher was here on Saturday when I happened to be from home ; he left a commission . . . for me to write you that the meeting he had at Ardceanchrocan had given great offence to the Brethren [*i.e.* the local Presbytery], who were met at Callendar on that Day and that they were threatening to lay it before the Assembly, and therefore begs you to write to some of your correspondents at Edinburgh, who may be of weight with some of them, if possible it may be prevented, but what success that may have I shall not pretend to say. I have reason to believe that Mr. Conacher's conduct with respect to rebaptizing his Converts, has not been so cautious, as some would wish, and that this is the great cause of umbrage, as he is the only person levelled against as yet, so far as I can learn, and *that* the heavy charge against him. The affair was broached last Tuesday at Dunblane, in the Presbytery, when they were very hot upon it, *threatening to obtain a Warrant for apprehending him* : he is in great Concern for you, lest any harm should befall you on his account, which I pray God to avert.”

This prayer was granted indeed, but not (as we have seen in (1) of this Section) before the Bishop had had some months of anxiety over the subject.

(2) The second of Mr. Conacher's difficulties arose in connection with Marriages. An exhaustive account of the case is recorded in the MSS. in the Theological College, Edinburgh, and has been given in print by Archdeacon Craven.<sup>1</sup> We give the following extracts, which will be enough to make the story clear :—

“ On the 30th of Jan. last (1755) Mr. Conacher was apprehended by a party of soldiers at his house in Gartclach in the shire, and 12 miles north-west from the town of Stirling.”

Of this arrest, the Rev. Ninian Niving gave the following vivid account to the Bishop :—<sup>2</sup>

“ I got a note from Mr. M'Ewan this day se'night bearing that he had been to visit Mr. Conacher the night before, and that he was quite against my coming to see him. Had he not fallen twice on the ice, he would certainly have escaped from his guards. They fired two shots after him.”

<sup>1</sup> *C.'s Argyle*, pp. 201-223.

<sup>2</sup> As the trial took place in 1755, surely 1757 as the date of this letter in *C.'s A.*, p. 201, must be a mistake.

He was confined in Stirling prison, by virtue of a warrant of the Lord Justice Clerk, dated Jan. 21st, 1755. The trial came on at Inverary on April 10th. The charge preferred against him was "the crime of celebrating marriages in a Clandestine and Inorderly way, without being authorized by the Church of Scotland." It was proved indeed that on those occasions every circumstance legally necessary was attended to, the offence which caused them to be described as "Clandestine and Inorderly" being the sole fact that they had not been "authorized by the Church of Scotland," but that was enough, and one of the laws which were so wicked when put in force by a Stewart Prince against the Covenanters, was revived and brought into play against Mr. Conacher. *He was sentenced to perpetual banishment from Scotland and forbidden to return under pain of death!*

Commenting on Mr. Conacher's fate in a letter to Bishop Alexander, dated 31st April, 1755, the Rev. W. Abernethy said :—

"Poor Conacher's fate is indeed hard, and the blow to the whole Clergy very hevie. God grant it may not have the bad effect we fear from it. I was extremely provoked at Walter Runciman's first account of the Trial, as it was a scandalous Libel against Conacher, but am no less vexed at yesterday's paragraph (inserted by advice of Harper and Bell), as it tells the whole world that Non-jurors are liable to Banishment in whatever way they solemnize Marriages. This is a point, which ought to have been concealed as much as possible from Presbyterian Ministers and Rascally Informers, but by our Friend's improvidence is now made public."

On May 19th Mr. Conacher himself wrote to the Bishop :—

"I thought fit to send you the Substance of that famous Tryall to peruse, Correct what will appear to you amiss in the Observations made on it and afterwards please forward the same to Mr. Bell, in order to be insert in the Magazine."

The question now arose what was to become of Mr. Conacher and Mr. Forbes, writing with reference to that on May 12th, first discussed the suitability of Sens in France; then considered that he must at least "show his face" in London and ended thus :—

"I have been and still am planning commendatory Epistles in favour of the worthy Man, go where he will. Alas! all choices are hard, when it is considered that the Highland Hills and Lochaber Braes are the proper, natural element of C. and that his place cannot be supplied by us all joined together."

The exile finally settled down as assistant to Bishop Gordon in London. The words addressed by the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill, taking up as they do the last words quoted from the Rev. R. Forbes, will make a fitting end to our account of the case :—

“ Mr. Conacher’s fate gives me very great Concern, as it does likewise to think what will become of his numerous and dispersed Congregation. No one Man in Scotland could supply his place, and I am afraid they will find great Difficulty to get any, which was no doubt foreseen by his Persecuters and would be a motive with them for treating him as they have done.”<sup>1</sup>

(2) *Muthill*.—The historian of this Congregation<sup>2</sup> writes :—

“ The ’45 was fatal [*i.e.* extremely hurtful] to the Congregation at Muthill.”

For one thing,

“ Alexander M’Gruther [a member of it] was taken prisoner in England and with others sentenced to death. But, more fortunate, because perhaps less prominent than his comrades, he was reprieved.”

For another :—

“ Many of those, who were regular worshippers with the little flock there had been concerned in the venture and left never to return. A comparison of the number of Baptisms before the ’45 with the number that followed, when persecution was heavy, shows a considerable falling off.”

The following well-known entry occurs in the *Muthill Register* :—

“ 1746. The confusion of the times, occasioned by a civil War raging in this Country and the Persecution that followed in great severity, often driving me [*i.e.* Rev. W. Erskine] from attending my Charge, make a chasm here, that cannot now be filled up, for tho’ many Baptisms were performed the inserting of them was not attended to in proper time, but some more is left for such as may be recovered—W.E.”

<sup>1</sup> Note.—On Nov. 28th, 1755, Mr. Forbes wrote to Bishop Alexander :—“ There is no fear of Mr. Conacher. I hope in God he will be well cared for, as B[p] G[ordon] is truly fond of him.” In 1764, Mr. Forbes (now Bishop) found him still ministering in Bishop Gordon’s Non-juring Chapel in London, and in 1769 Bishop G. told him that Mr. Conacher was still alive (C.’s Bishop F. 33, 35, 37, 46).

<sup>2</sup> S.’s Strathearn, pp. 30-1 and Hallen’s *Muthill Register*, p. 10.

The page, that follows, was left blank, and blank it remains to this day—the pathetic memorial of a sad time.

The following letter,<sup>1</sup> addressed by Mr. Erskine, evidently to the Bishop, on April 14th, 1747, is unfortunately a good deal torn, but its general sense is clear enough and adds to our previous knowledge of his labours in this distressing time:—

“ I had yours of the 16th March by the Bear[er las]t time he was in the Country, but had no Opportunity till now to write you. It is very lately that I got [so man]y people, having been seven Sundays in the Country (?). I had once gone over them all, tho’ sometimes I off[ciated] five and sometimes six times in a Day, how I will (?) it out about this Festival I know not, but God [willin]g I shall do all I can : as soon after this as I can I w[ill] endeavour to see you, which I much long for. [The] Bearer shall bring your Cloak-bag, for the use of which I heartily thank you and I hope you shall find no worse of use. I would have returned it sooner [but coul]d get no Opportunity.”

On July 20th the Rev. W. Abernethy informed the Bishop that most of Mr. Erskine’s people “ have run unto Ye Schism.”

The next entry in this faithful man’s *Register* is well-known and runs as follows :—

“ 1750. Helen, lawful daughter of Andrew Moir and Ann Gray in Crofthead of Farmtown, born March 18th, was baptised the 20th day of March, 1750.

N.B.—With such excessive severity were the penal laws executed at this time that Andrew Moir having neglected to keep his appointment with me at my own House this morning and following me to Lord Rollo’s house at Duncrub, we could not take the child unto a house, but I was obliged to go under cover of trees in one of Lord Rollo’s parks to prevent our being discovered, and baptized the child there.”

#### IV.

Besides the executions, the Chapel burnings, the imprisonments, the banishments, and the stamping out of public Worship, as related above, there were other forms of suffering also, which our Churchmen were called upon to bear :—

(1) For instance, there was impoverishment. Bishop Alexander was one of those, who fell into trial of this kind. Although the following extracts from a letter<sup>2</sup> of his dated Oct.

<sup>1</sup> Ep. Ch. 598.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. Chest. 36.

17th, 1748, are quietly worded, they imply a good deal. Referring to his private means, he said :—

“ All my Stock . . . was from my Father . . . which fell to me only after my Mother's death, *viz.* 1100d in the Duke of Perth's hands and Wood in Calendar's, both of which you know are in jeopardy now and one has been useless to me for several years.”

Then, alluding to his clerical income, he added :—

“ My ordinary Funds do by no means answer and every year upon the Decline, which I cannot complain of, because they [*i.e.* the Alloa Church people] do all they are able.”<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. George Innes of Perth was in even worse condition for on Feb. 5th, 1750, he wrote to the Bishop :—

“ You see my people are mouldering away [*i.e.* through death] and my Finances every day growing lower and indeed in a little time they are like to be scarce worth notting. Yet I am better content than I thought I could have been on so considerable a reduction. Providence, I hope, will provide.”

His resources also, such as they were, became further reduced through others in distress coming to him for help :—

“ Some small sums that I had lent without Security to People in Necessity . . . cannot be got in.”

And two letters<sup>2</sup> addressed by the Rev. Robert Lyon of Streton to Bishop Alexander shew us that the Presbyter of Carsebank was likewise reduced, if not quite, yet very nearly to actual poverty. In the first, dated Aug. 12th, 1755, he said :

“ Honest David Guthrie ! I feel for him and must say what I am thinking. May you not help one without any other knowing about it ? ”

And in the second, dated Oct. 16th, of the same year :—

“ I rejoice that honest David Guthrie is not strictly in Straits.”

Moreover the following extract from a letter,<sup>3</sup> written by Bishop Alexander on March 12th, 1751, to the Rev. Robert Forbes shews that, even when attempts were made to forward help to the Clergy, there were serious “ slips betwixt the cup and lip ” :—

<sup>1</sup> In the same letter he tells us that Bishop Falconar was in lower circumstances than himself and the Primus, and they had to exert themselves on his behalf.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gordon's MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. Ch. 37.

“ Mr. Conacher informs me as to Secretary Murray of what I knew not before, *viz.*, that in coming down the Country before he was taken, he had been with him some time in skulking, etc., and that, before their parting, he told them he had a sum of Money to distribute among the Episcopal Clergy in Scotland, and he [Conacher] took it to be considerable, for he told him that, over and above his equal share in the Distribution, there would be £10 extraordinary for him and he believes, if he had asked it then, he might have had it. Ballachallan, he said, was present. I said that if he and Bal. would attest that, perhaps a way might be found to recover the Money.”

Evidently Mr. Secretary Murray had been captured by the authorities, and the money, with which he had been entrusted for the Scottish Clergy, confiscated.

(2) Another cause of suffering to our friends in the Dioceses of Dunkeld and Dunblane was the receipt of news concerning the progress of the persecution in other districts. That such suffering is no imaginary thing will be clearly realized by all who have gone through a similar experience. No attempt will be made here to give a complete account of the working of the penal laws elsewhere, but such allusions as are made to them in letters addressed to Bishop Alexander will now be mentioned.

Curiously enough there does not appear to be any such allusion to the imprisonment<sup>1</sup> of the Revs. Alex. Greig of Stonehaven, John Petrie of Drumlithie, and John Troup of Muchalls in 1748, although the occurrence of such well-known cases must have spread some dismay amongst Bishop Alexander's Clergy. Mention, however, is made of the incarceration in 1753 of the Rev. John Skinner of Longside, whose Chapel had been destroyed and his house pillaged in 1746,<sup>2</sup> for on Oct. 23rd, 1753, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote thus to Bishop Alexander :—

“ When God sees fit, He will put a stop to Persecution and will never be wanting to sufferers for His sake who are not wanting to themselves. May His grace be sufficient for all, and His holy Will be done. Good [Bp.] G[erard] tells me that his Bairn [*i.e.* Skinner] has done nobly under his Restraint. All glory to God.”

Bishop Alexander himself, too, wrote thus to Bishop Keith<sup>3</sup> on Nov. 19th, 1753 :—

<sup>1</sup> T.S. 344. L. p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> T.S. 354.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. Ch. 38.

“ G. [*i.e.* Bishop Gerard] writes that three of Mr. Jaffray's hearers have been summoned anew, brought in and fined in £5 Ster. each and were obliged to pay, only the Clerk passed from his third part. The two Brethren in the Enzie have been obliged to abscond ; their hearers also have been summoned, and upon their appearance threatened with the Penalty if ever they hear such Pastors again ; and this is the Method which it is said the Persecutors do hereafter intend to take, as being more effectual and less invidious.”

And on Feb. 25th, 1759, the Rev. George Skene wrote to the Bishop about trouble in Laurencekirk where the Presbyter had evidently been brow-beaten by Lord Halkerstone into giving up his Service :—

“ Mr. Strachan<sup>1</sup> had not officiated for some time. I told him and still think he was a little too complaisant to his Lordship in so doing upon his bare message, and, in case he [*i.e.* his Lordship] cannot be soothed and brought to a better Mind, he designs to officiate again as usual and stand a Prosecution. Would it not have been better to have been of this mind from the beginning ? ”

(3) Still another terror was that caused by spies. The Rev. W. Abernethy alluded to it in the following words addressed to Bishop Alexander on Oct. 31, 1759, in connection with the Consecration of the Rev. Henry Edgar as Coadjutor to the Primus :—

“ I am extremely glad you are to be at Cupar, since the Consecration must take place at that time ; but, to say the truth, I think it is a bold step for you to meet at this Crisis, *when there are certainly spies in every place* and for that reason I could have wished it had been put off for some months.”

(4) The Rev. Robert Lyon informs us of another form of oppression with which our harassed friends had to put up, *i.e.* the opening of their letters by the officials of the post office. Writing to Bishop Alexander on Aug. 14th, 1746, he said :—

“ Many, I find, suggest that all Letters are opened and read in Post offices, and I cannot affirm that none are ; but, so far as I have been able to observe, every Letter to or from myself that was entered into any Office, has been duly forwarded, if any had the Curiosity to read them by the way, I never enquired.”

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Bishop of Brechin.

Of course, since what he was writing had itself to go through the Post, it behoved him to express himself very cautiously. His practical advice to the Bishop runs thus :—

“ We may indeed have little to say for some time, yet to reciprocate mere bills of Health may be agreeable to both.”

On Oct. 2nd, he returned to the subject in veiled language :—

“ A fine Cork-screw in a canny Hand can open a bottle and taste your Liquor without your perceiving it, therefore be not over-confident in getting any unbroached.”

And that doubtless explains why it is that, although his letters to Bishop Alexander are very numerous in these years, there are no references to the Persecution in them.

(5) The last inconvenience which we shall mention as having distressed our friends during this dark period was general groundless suspicion. In the following extract, for instance, we see our worthy Prelate considering it prudent to remain indoors for a while, because a murder had been committed, and doubtless he did not want to be charged with it. On July 25th, 1752, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to the Bishop :

“ I hope there are no other Troubles in the Country but what come through the Search after the murderers of Glenure, in which Search, however, many innocent Persons are brought to Inconvenience and you seem to judge right in keeping at Home, although you be not crowded with Company.”

The following document will form a suitable conclusion to this chapter. The original is in Bishop Alexander's hand-writing and is doubtless his own composition. It is undated, but, since it is written on the blank page of a letter of the Rev. Robert Lyon of Stretton, which is dated Aug. 14th, 1746, and makes mention of the “ New Act ” restricting the legal number of worshippers to five, which belongs to that year, it may itself be confidently dated in 1746 :—

“ In all civil Commotions the Church has generally been a Sufferer, but ours is now become a Sacrifice to the Rage and Malice of her Enemies, and, unless God in His Goodness is pleased by some signal Providence to interpose for her Deliverance, must soon be utterly extinguished. In these Circumstances, so affecting to all good Men, her Friends think it their Duty to be looking out what Means may be fallen upon for her Preservation. The gentlemen who were her principal Supporters, being for the greater part engaged in the Misfortunes of the Country, have at present no Prospect of returning to their Houses, and, though they

had, are now unable to do as they were wont. By the Restrictions in the New Act, the present Number of Clergie will not in any tolerable Measure be able to support the Exigencies of the People, for in some Congregations by serving only five at a Time in different Companys the whole would scarce be supplied with Worship once in a year. So that the Charge must be considerably greater, while the Means of defraying it are in a yet greater Proportion diminished, if not quite sunk. This sad Case, if ever any, does loudly call for the compassion of all charitable Christians, who, it is hoped, will contribute both Counsel and Assistance according to their Abilities for saving the poor Remnants of a Church which has so long been under the Cross and gloriously suffered for her steady and unshaken Adherence to the Cause of pure and primitive Christianity, both in Doctrine, Worship, and Government, when most borne down by the Power of Violence, of Persecution and fashionable Error. The Scripture recommends that, if one member suffer, the whole Body should sympathise, and it appears from the New Testament and other ancient Documents that, when any particular Church, groaning under Persecution or other heavy Calamity in the early Ages, the Method was for the rest of the Churches to contribute and make Collections to supply its wants. There may be at present 130 Clergy in this Kingdom; now it is proposed that their Number be increased to 200, who by doubling their Diligence and going about among their People all the Week to instruct them in a Catechetical way, may under God preserve them from running into the Schism (which under the present Discouragements many of them will be too apt to do) and keep alive a Remnant and a Seed amongst us, till it shall please God to visit us with more favourable Dispensations; and, if a Fund of 2 or 3000d £ sterline per ann. could be raised, it might afford suppose £10 to each of them and something for the Maintenance of the Bishops, besides which, with what their People could be able to furnish, might serve the present Exigence and keep up the Face of a Church; the Distribution of this money to be in the Hands of the Bishops, which would be of Use to have their Clergy in a due Subjection and the Bishops to keep an exact Account of their Intromissions and Disbursements and have their Vouchers ready to shew for the Satisfaction of the Collector and Contributors as to the due and faithful application of the Fund."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### 1746-1759.—*The Bishop's Affairs.*

In the foregoing chapter the aim has been directed to one point, namely to collect together everything that has survived<sup>1</sup> to illustrate the working of the penal laws in the Dioceses of Dunkeld and Dunblane, and two remarks of the Rev. Robert Lyon addressed to Bishop Alexander respectively on Oct. 25th, 1748, and July 25th, 1752, concisely sum up the situation. In the first he said :—

“ The Church of Scotland has long been under a Cloud, never blacker and darker than at present.”

and in the second :—

“ I do not wonder you should be touched with the state of the District. It affects me at this Distance [*i.e.* Bedfordshire]. May He, who only can, afford a Remedy ! ”

In these two chapters our object will be to retrace our steps over the same years, but this time with a view to noticing, not the obstacles, with which the Diocese had to contend, but the amount of ordinary pastoral, literary, and other peaceful work which, notwithstanding all difficulties, our Church people succeeded in overtaking. This course might lead into some amount of repetition, inasmuch as the same passage from a MS. often illustrates both the working of the penal laws and also what was accomplished in spite of them, but care will be taken to reduce this inconvenience to a minimum.

While proceeding in Chap. XIV. to give the fragments of history, which remain for each of the charges in the united Diocese, we confine ourselves in the present to the fortunes of the Bishop :—

(1) *Alloa.* We shall make the transition from the distresses recounted in the last chapter to the peaceful transactions of the present, by way of certain minor troubles which he had to encounter.

Thus on Sept. 20th, 1750, we have the Rev. A. Livingstone writing as follows to him :—

“ I'm much bound to you for the Information given me anent your Mob. . . . It was much but your Worship was greatly disturbed Sunday last by the Mob.”

<sup>1</sup> It is probable that there were other acts of persecution in our District, the record of which has perished.

This, indeed, might seem at first sight to be an incident more appropriate for Chapter XII., but it really fits in here, because the threatening crowd, to which reference is made, was not in the first instance "out" against the Bishop and his flock; it only took their Meeting-House in the bye-going from exuberance of energy. The fact was that during the last ten years there had been no less than fifty disputed ministerial settlements in the Established Church<sup>1</sup> and one such had occurred at the present time in the Presbytery of Dunfermline, evidently at Alloa, and such had been the public excitement that the soldiers had been called out. To the latter circumstance the Rev. Robert Lyon alluded in a letter to the Bishop on Nov. 30th, 1750 :—

"Wish the old Buffs prove good Neighbours to other Folk [*i.e.* the 'Episcopalians' ?] let the Rioters stand their Hazard."

And on Nov. 9th, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote :—

"The former Week some Companies of the Military passed through this place [*i.e.* Dunfermline] in order to plant your [*i.e.* Alloa parish] Church, but have heard nothing of their success."

Compared, therefore, with the usual experience of having both the soldiers and the mob out directly against himself and his co-religionists, it was a lesser trouble for Bishop Alexander to have the military interfering to keep order amongst the Presbyterian factions and the mob troubling him only in passing !

Another temporary trouble was a collision with his old friend the Rev. A. Livingstone. On May 31st, 1750, that Presbyterian wrote him a very angry letter, which is unique in their correspondence. The cause of the outbreak is not quite clear, but it seems as if the Bishop must have addressed an episcopal rebuke to him for some apparently irregular ecclesiastical act. This he resented, both as being unjust in fact, and also as addressed to him by one, who was not his Diocesan, and he expressed his mind to the Bishop very plainly. However, the end was very honourable to both.

The Bishop, indeed, seems to have replied justifying himself in detail, but Mr. Livingstone's answer was as follows :—

"I had yours of the 4th Instant. To give a distinct answer to every part of it (which I observe with an impartial eye), however Self-defence or the Need (?) of the thing may require, yet Christian Prudence forbids it; the protracting a paper war being neither suitable to your Character nor mine own. So I far rather chuse to bury in Oblivion what is past; and, for the future, let us in the Name of

<sup>1</sup> W. Stephen II. 523-4.

God, live, as we pray, according to the words of the Church, *viz.* :—in Unity and Godly love.”

This they succeeded in doing. The correspondence flows on as frequent and as friendly as before, without another allusion to the misunderstanding.

There was also bad health, with which the Bishop (like so many of the Clergy of those days) had to contend. The following extracts make that quite clear.

Writing to the Bishop on Dec. 7th, 1746, from Perth, Dr. Stirling said :—

“ We were sorrie to find by yours that you were distressed.”

On Dec. 3rd, the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote :—

“ You was threatened with a squincey.”

On Jan. 9th, 1750, the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill wrote :—

“ I am heartily sorry to understand by both your letters that you are afflicted with that ugly toothache.”

On Dec. 4th, 1750, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote :—

“ I hope, when in Edinburgh you have not neglected to take advice of a Prince of all mortal Physicians, Dr. Clerk, about those Collicks which afflict you. My earnest Wishes and humble Prayers are for your Health and Happiness in every respect.”

On Sept. 19th, 1754, the same correspondent said :—

“ I fear your worthy B[rother] W[hite] cannot hold it long ; 'tis a good while since I would have had him drink some Lime Water for that Strangury, and so I would have you do for your gravelish complaints ; there is nothing equal to it.”

On Nov. 9th, 1754 :—

“ I had yours of the 21st ulto. and very much approve of your using the Lime Water ; it is certainly a notable Cleanser of the Blood and is said to have wrought next to Wonders in gravelish cases. Soon may you have it to say that you feel yourself relieved of that terrible Complaint ; and, if the Rheumatisms will also quit their hold, so much the better.”

Besides the lime water, the Bishop also used other methods of cure. On Oct. 23rd, 1753, Mr. Lyon wrote :—

“ A Letter from your worthy friend and Br[other] B[p] G[erard] gave me the first Intimation of your having turned your head homeward. He gave me some hint of your Expedition, particularly of your being benefited by the Well of Peterhead, which I daresay gave as much

pleasure to your then Landlord, as it can do to me, *i.e.* as much as to yourself."

Three years later, *i.e.* on Aug. 24th, 1756, he was again in Aberdeen, apparently for the same purpose.

Sometimes, however, the Bishop's health was excellent :—

" *March 26th*, 1751. Blessed be God that you have so far shaken off your distress, as to be able to ride about. May you soon be and long continue quite well.

" *May 4th*, 1754. Am heartily glad you have stood the Winter so well. . . . R[obert] F[orbes] gave me the pleasure to know that you and B[ishop] F[alconar] had been in his house hail and hearty."

Passing away now from the subject of troubles altogether, we find that the Bishop had intervals of peace, not only from bad health but also from persecution. Even in the year of Culloiden we have the following notices.

About six weeks after the battle (May 21st, 1746) Mr. Erskine wrote :—

" I'm heartily glad to hear that you have met with no disturbance in this troublesome World and hope kind Providence will still continue to protect you."

Exactly a month later, Mr. Livingstone wrote :—<sup>1</sup>

" From what I can learn, no Clergyman in the Nation has publick Worship but yourself, which I wish you and your Congregation may long enjoy, but I'm afraid you'll undergo the Fate of others. I wish you do not too much expose yourself, for the violence of our Enemies rages most furiously."

Mr. Guthrie also, writing from Restenneth on Sept. 8th, 1746, to the Bishop, said :—

" Nothing could be more agreeable than the comfortable accounts Mr. Erskine gave of your welfare. May the Divine Goodness long preserve you for a signal Blessing to his distressed Church."

And Mr. Seton, writing from Forfar on Sept. 9th, confirms the same fact :—

" I hope you will credit me when I hereby tell you that it was a matter of great satisfaction to me to learn from Mr. Areskine [*i.e.* Erskine], as he was going north, that you were in good health and had been safe during all this calamitous time, which, like an overflowing flood, has carried all here before it."

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gordon's MSS.

It is not surprising that during this the darkest period of all there were no Ordinations for the Diocese. There was, however one for Bishopless Edinburgh, which was performed by Bishop Alexander :—

“ *Alloa, June 22nd, 1749.* Mr. Thomas Beal in Edinburgh having passed the customary tryalls was ordained Deacon in the Chapel there [*i.e.* Alloa], present Mr. Ninian Niving in Torbrex, Mr. Wm. Erskine at Muthill, Mr. Wm. Harper at Bothkennar and Mr. John Blair in Down, Priests.”

It is noteworthy that besides the Bishop, who officiated, there were five others present. Seeing therefore that the Act limiting the number of worshippers to four had been passed in the previous September, this little Ordination company in Alloa ran some risk by attending the Service.

Besides taking this Ordination the Bishop also seems to have inspected his Diocese about this time, though doubtless with as little ostentation as possible. On July 26th, 1748, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote :—

“ I shall expect a pretty full History after your Return from your Visitation.”

How we wish that our Prelate's “ pretty full History ” of his tour through the District at this interesting time had survived, but alas ! it has not. As will be seen, however, when we come to Blairgowrie, he administered Confirmation in that Congregation in 1747, 1748, 1750, 1753, 1756, and 1758. Doubtless, if the Registers of other charges had also been preserved, we should have found many further proofs of his faithfulness in the discharge of his episcopal duties.

From letters written to him by Mr. Livingstone on Jan. 31st and Dec. 13th, 1750, we find that he used also to visit Edinburgh every year. What the objects were on these occasions does not appear, but, doubtless, calls on Bishop Keith and that “ Prince of physicians, Dr. Clerk,” would be included amongst them. We can follow the Bishop, too, into his study, which was evidently a place most congenial to him and here we have glimpses of several interesting books.

If we bear in mind that his friend, Bishop Keith, published his *Catalogue of Scottish Bishops*<sup>1</sup> in 1755, we shall have little difficulty in following Bishop Alexander, when he writes<sup>2</sup> to the author on Nov. 19th, 1753 :—

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Dowden speaks with high appreciation of this work in the preface to his “ Bishops of Scotland.”

<sup>2</sup> Ep. Ch. 38.

"I am of opinion that you should by all means take notice of the Alteration of Religion. It will be a proper Introduction to your second Part, viz., the Reformed Bishops, to give a brief Deduction of the Manner of our Reformation, the unsettled State of the Polity under the Regents, how Presbytery came to take place, etc., till Episcopacy came to be restored, where I would also have you give an Account of as many of the Titulars and Superintendents as you can recover, a short Sketch also of the next Interruption of the Succession in the Covenant times and what Reflections you judge proper upon the last Stroke at the Revolution, etc., would make it a connected thing and an useful sort of compend of Church History, fit to be in the Hands of the People and might be of more Service to open their eyes, than long elaborate Volumes of Controversy, which rather foster Contention than lead to Truth."

In this letter, Bishop Alexander alluded to the financial aspect of the publication:—

"I received yours of the 14th, at which time mine of the 12th had not reached you. I hope it has since, for it enclosed three 20B. notes and I am persuaded that Mr. Innes's 18 will soon come also to your hand, which with B[p] G[erard]'s and what you have from England, will enable you to set the Press going."

On Nov. 28th, 1755, the Rev. R. Forbes of Leith wrote to the Bishop:—

"By this Time you must know that the *Catalogue* is published. I have desired Mr. Bell [late of Doune] to pack up 40 copies for you according to a List I find with B[p] K[eith] in your own handwriting. Besides the former payment 3 Shill. and 6 pence to be paid for each Copy."

On Jan. 23rd, 1756, the Bishop's nephew, Arthur Petrie, of whom we shall soon hear more, wrote from Walkinshaw:—

"I wrote you last week that I would send to Edinr. to Mr. Bell for 2 copies of Bishop Keith's *Catalogue*."

Mr. Forbes also supplies us with the interesting information that Bishop Alexander had written a Preface to the *Catalogue* but that it was finally decided not to publish it:—

"Herewith (he said) your Reverence has the *Preface*, which I was packing up, as your [letter] came to hand. I have transcribed it to be bound up with my Copy. . . . In the *Preface* you have these words, "What turn Affairs took," etc. . . . After the *Preface* was not to be printed (which I regret more and more every day) I took care it should not go into any other hands, lest it should be amissing. I wish your Reverence would think of making out those

since 1688 [*i.e.* the list of Bishops] down to the present Time. Whatever Notes or Remarks you may make upon the several Sees, I beg your Reverence may allow me the Use of your Papers to fill up my Interleavings."

In the following extract from a letter from the Rev. Robert Lyon to our Bishop, dated Feb. 2nd, 1754, there is allusion made to a *Catechism*.<sup>1</sup> It looks as if Mr. Lyon had been trying to procure a publisher in the south for the Bishop's MS., but was now returning it to Scotland :—

"Tandem I sent by our Carrier to London yesterday your *Catechism*, to be forwarded for you (through the hands of R[obert] F[orbes] by first Ship for Leith, and with it a friendly Criticism, if a Friend's sentiments may be so called. You'll find that I've added somewhat to the other Friend's observations and can tell me what you think. Were men of this age so much as curious to know what Christianity was and is, such a System of Principles as are laid down in that same MS. would not fail to bring profits to a Publisher, but we see that whoever will publish on that side the Question, must even sit down with the Loss as to money matters."

Another work in which our Bishop interested himself was an essay on Church history by the Rev. John Skinner of Linshart, which doubtless was afterwards used by that divine in the composition of the earlier chapters of his well-known *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*. Writing to the Rev. Robert Lyon, he said :—

"[Bp. Gerard] says that Skinner is just now writing a Dissertation upon the first Planting of Christainity in Scotland and is to deduce his account briefly from the Apostolic Age and this with another performance of the same Author's is to be sent up for your Perusal."

We saw in considering the year 1744 that there were many who did not welcome the posthumous publication of Bishop Rattray's *Liturgy of S. James*. It is all the more gratifying therefore to find at least one person expressing enthusiasm, if not in a worldly-wise, yet in a sincere way for that valuable work at the present time. On July 25th, 1752, Mr. Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

<sup>1</sup> Robert Forbes's own *Catechism*, which seems to have been in MS. as early as 1737, was re-published under Bishop Dowden's editorship by the Scottish Clergy Society in 1904. The Rev. George Innes of Aberdeen and the Rev. W. Abernethy also published Catechisms. On Jan. 13th, 1753, the Rev. Robt. Lyon asked Bishop Alexander—"Pray what has become of Innes's *Catechism*? I should be content to see either his or Abernethy's but do not think both can be necessary."

“ Letter from John Ogilvy of Inshewan [near Forfar] of 23rd from London and under Abernethy's Cover to me, as publisher of *Lit. Jac.*, asks my allowance to Mr. Drummond of Callendar to translate said *Lit. Jac.* into French for the good of Mankind, etc. I presume this Mr. Drummond is still abroad and Mr. Ogilvy newly come over, but I remember neither of the Gentlemen and what shall I say? Need you ask James Rattray? I suppose you need not. I shall bid the Gentleman be doing for his own amusement in the meantime, but to wait further advice and to consider well before he attempt to publish.”

We are also glad to find that, notwithstanding the slowness with which the *Liturgy of S. James* was at first taken up, it had by this time at least paid its own expenses. On May 30th, 1750, Mr. Lyon wrote to our Bishop:—

“ I received more for *Lit. Jac.* than clears all charges on it.”

But it was not only the *opus magnum* of Bishop Rattray on which Bishop Alexander's circle set great store. Everything from his pen was valued. Thus on July 31st, 1759, the Rev. Robert Forbes wrote to our Bishop:—

“ The other day, when in Galen's [*i.e.* Abernethy's, who was now M.D.] room, I spied upon his Table in your handwriting Dr. Rattray's Sermon on the Lord's Day and the Eucharist, which instantly I asked the use of. It is now in my hands, and, how soon I can find time to inscribe it into a Book, where I have other valuable Things of that Worthy, it shall be carefully restored to him.”

It is well known that the elder Skinner, father of Primus John Skinner, was an ardent disciple and apostle of Hutchinsonianism in the Scottish Church during the latter half of the 18th century. It was a system, based on an esoteric manner of interpreting Hebrew, the aim of which was to confute all heresies, especially those of the Unitarians and the scientific followers of Newton, but the result of which was to land its supporters in serious theological errors of their own.<sup>1</sup> At this point, which we have reached in Bishop Alexander's life, we discover the source from whence it spread from England to Scotland. That source was none other than our friend, the Rev. Robert Lyon, Chaplain to Mr. Bowdler of Stretton in Bedfordshire. About the year 1750 his letters are full of enthusiastic references to the Hutchinsonian Benjamin Holloway's forthcoming work *The Originals*, the proof sheets of which he kept sending from time to time to Bishop Alexander. The only evidence that our Prelate was inclined towards the system is the fact that he ordered 20 copies of the book. But that is far from conclusive, for a man may be

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller explanation of it see “Bp. Watson,” chap. VI.

deeply interested in a new theory ; especially may a Bishop view with provisional favour the explanation of fresh teaching which professes to defend Orthodoxy without being definitely committed to acceptance of it and particularly may this be the case when he is enthusiastically pressed by one of his most valued friends to order copies of the new work. All we can therefore say of Bishop Alexander's connection with Hutchinsonianism is that, when it was first brought to his notice, he was interested in it and gave it serious consideration. There is nothing further to connect him with it.

On July 26th, 1748, Mr. Lyon wrote :—

“ There is a gentle Bickering just now about that old Hutcheson's Plan. I know not if B. H[olloway] is concerned in it.”

June 13th, 1749. Ben [*i.e.* Holloway] is much in love with G[erard]'s young Critic [Skinner] and begs, if he has not done it already, that forthwith he would apply himself to the Hebrew, which, when you go North, you may enforce to the worthy Father G[erard] and prehaps to the Young Man himself.” [Mr. Skinner was now about 28<sup>1</sup>]

Another well-known work, *i.e.* Hume's *History of England*, the first volume of which was published in 1754, attracted the notice of our Bishop's circle. On Feb. 13th, 1755, the Rev. R. Lyon wrote thus to him :—

“ Hume has been through many more hands here than the other [*i.e.* Goodall on Queen Mary], but I have not heard of any one who is pleased with him, though the Complaints against him are very different. I am of those, who grieve for his Infidelity, but let the Kirk and him try their Hands upon one another.”

The last of the Bishop's literary interests belonging to this period, which we shall mention is the collection of MSS. bearing on the fortunes of the Church, which he had formed the habit of gathering. To this the Rev. Robert Forbes made the following allusion on Apr. 24th, 1759 :—

“ Had Arthur Petrie been like to live, I would have had no anxiety about them [*i.e.* the MSS.], for your Reverence would have been well succeeded under God ; but, as that is not like to be the Case, I own I am not a little anxious about your valuable Papers, which I could heartily wish to be properly ranked for preservation and use.

Whether the whole of the Bishop's Collection has survived or not, the present writer does not know, but certainly although it has long since passed out of the keeping even of Arthur Petrie,

<sup>1</sup> W's Sk. of L., p. 203.

who did after all survive his uncle, a large number of the MSS. are now ranged on the bookshelves of the Theological College, Edinburgh. It is impossible to view them there without some pensive emotion on the part of the beholder, and they are "the rock" from which the present work is very largely "hewn."

The foregoing allusions to the Bishop's favourite Nephew<sup>1</sup> make it natural to introduce here some account of the relations between Arthur Petrie and his Right Reverend uncle. They form a very pleasing episode in our Prelate's life.

Young Petrie was the son of Colin Petrie, tenant of Clinkston in Aberdeenshire, and his wife, Isabella, the Bishop's sister. He first comes before us in a letter written by his father to his uncle on June 12th, 1750, from which it appears that the latter had been exerting himself to obtain a suitable appointment for his young relative. Mr. Petrie says :—

"I saw your Letter to Arthur and I cannot express the kindness and care you have for him. . . . He hath been a good, dutiful, and obedient child to his Mother and me."

The outcome of the Bishop's plans was that he started in life as Tutor in the family of Walkinshaw, not far from Glasgow, on the salary of £6 per annum. Here he devoted himself so sincerely to his duties that, when he became ill, as he did, the family took the most anxious care of him. One trouble he had, and that was lest the influential friends of the Walkinshaws should insist on his taking the oaths to Government, but the point was never raised. During his residence in that quarter, his uncle made much use of him by way of asking him to visit Glasgow for the purpose of buying books. One of these was the *Scots Ordination Offices*, in which, as we have seen, all the Bishops were interested. He very nearly let the precious volume slip through his fingers, but in the end he was successful in securing it for his uncle. In 1754 he spread consternation amongst his relatives by announcing that it was his purpose to emigrate to Jamaica, but he yielded to the remonstrances which they addressed to him, and, much to the future benefit of the Church, remained in Scotland. In 1756 the correspondence between uncle and nephew is marked by the same affection as before. Thus on March 9th, Arthur wrote :—

"I cannot express the Obligation I ly under to your Goodness and parental Care of me, nor can I make any Return but gratitude and an endeavour to conform myself to your Counsel and Directions."

The two chief topics dealt with in the letters of this year were the advisability of the young man giving up his tutorship at Walkinshaw, so as to have proper time for his own studies, and

<sup>1</sup> He was destined to be one of the Consecrators of Bishop Seabury.

the illness and death of his mother, who passed away in the last week of April. In December he took his pupils to Edinburgh and wrote thence to his uncle that "Every one is kind to me on your account." There must have been something very engaging about Arthur! On Sept. 12th, 1757, we have an example of the good influence which he had over his pupils. Writing to the Bishop he said :—

"I wrote to you formerly that I hoped to see you this Harvest, because I heard my Pupil was to visit his friends in Stirlingshire. As I think you are wont to administer the Holy Sacrament on the first Sunday of October, ever since the proposal was first made, I have earnestly wished that our journey might fall about that time and that my Pupil might be prevailed upon to go your length, in order to receive the Sacrament from your hands."

Needless to say, on Sept. 16th, the Bishop wrote an edifying and encouraging reply. Ten days earlier he had agreed to accept the Tutorship at Balgowan, between Perth and Crieff, but he had hardly arrived there when he found the duties uncongenial and resigned the new post. He then returned to Aberdeenshire for the sake of his health. On Aug. 25th, he wrote to the Bishop :

"You are the Person in whom under God I confide in most for Counsel and direction."

Next year, (1758) his father, Colin Petrie, died.

This chapter will find an appropriate ending with some glimpses at the Bishop's other friendships.

One of these was with General and Mrs. Paterson of Bannockburn. The origin of this friendship is made known to us in the following extract of a letter from Mr. Lyon, addressed to the Bishop on May 31st, 1750 :—

"When I was in London your Br[other] B[ishop] G[ordon] told me that Charles Smith [*i.e.* the father of the heiress of Touch's husband<sup>1</sup>] had complained in a friendly way of you that you never visited them, though you would be most welcome to them all. Of this G[ordon] desired me to inform you (with his Compliments) that you may, if you think fit, remove the ground of complaint without seeming to have had such Information."

Accordingly on March 12th, 1751, the Bishop himself wrote back :—

"The week before last I happened to dine at Touch, where General Paterson and his Lady were. They are a very courteous, obliging couple, and bear an excellent Character

<sup>1</sup> Touch is near Stirling.

in the Country. Bishop Gordon<sup>1</sup> was mentioned with great veneration, and Bishop Smith<sup>2</sup> with no less. I joined in the Applause of the former, but kept silence in the latter. I promised them a visit last week at Bannockburn and accordingly was there a night, but the General had been seized with a Colick, which kept him a day or two longer at Touch than he had designed, so that I missed him. In my way to Stirling homewards I met Charles Smith, who urged me much to go forward to Touch but I was under a Necessity to go home."

We conclude with a friendly act of proffered kindness on the part of our Bishop. The Rev. W. Abernethy had lately been in England, where he had been trying to pick up an appointment similar to that held by the Rev. Robert Lyon at Stretton, *i.e.* a Chaplaincy to some Non-juring Nobleman or Gentleman, but such posts were not easily to be obtained. He had, therefore, returned north, and, no doubt with a view to enabling him to make a living, had taken the degree of M.D. at Edinburgh. Naturally at this juncture a pause occurred, during which he was uncertain of his immediate future, and Bishop Alexander sent him an invitation to stay with him in his house at Alloa. All accounts represent the excellent, newly-fledged physician as being of a somewhat imperious and fiery temper, and therefore we are not surprised to find Mr. Lyon telling the Bishop that he had acted inconsiderately for himself, but that matter was not put to the test, inasmuch as Dr. Abernethy courteously declined the invitation.

So much for the affairs of Bishop Alexander, other than persecutions, during the period 1746-1759, during which, as we saw in the last chapter, the penal laws were in active operation. Our feelings, on looking back over them, are well expressed by the words which Mr. Lyon addressed to the Bishop on Oct. 25th, 1748, when the darkness was at its very blackest:—

"Adored be that kind Providence which still discovers some glimpse of a Bow in the Cloud!"

<sup>1</sup> For *Bp. Gordon* see Overton pp. 323-8. He was Scottish by birth and brought up "in the Scottish Nonjurant Church" but had English connections which were strengthened by his marriage with Bishop Smith's sister-in-law, Miss Bedford. When Bishop R. Forbes fled from Leith before the Government dragoons in 1764, he paid a visit to Bishop Gordon in London and was grieved to find how the Congregation to which he ministered had dwindled. He was the last Bishop of the *regular* line of the English Nonjurors (O. p. 327). The Scottish Bishops were on the most friendly terms with him and, when dying in 1779, he bequeathed the care of his Congregation to them.

<sup>2</sup> For *Bp. Smith* see above ch. X. The grave offence which he had given to the Scottish Bishops in the matter of the Edinbrough revolt, will be remembered.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### 1746-1759.—*Diocesan, Congregational, and Private Affairs.*

The peaceful affairs of the Bishop alone were enough to provide matter for the last chapter. Those of the charges under his care, other than Alloa, will provide material for this :—

(2) *Alyth*. The Rev. Francis Crombie, Presbyter here and Diocesan Synod Clerk, was, as we have seen, constantly interchanging duty with the Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie previous to the "Forty-five," but there is no record of his having done so after the disaster of Culloden. In fact he now almost disappears from view. Enough, however, remains to shew that he continued in his old charge during the whole period, which is dealt with in this chapter. For one thing, he is mentioned in the *Dunkeld Register* as assisting at Ordinations held by the Bishop at Alloa on Oct. 11th, 1750 ; March 5th, 1751 ; and March 5th, 1752. It is true that on these occasions he is described as being "at Kirkhill," but, as is clearly seen from the *Blairgowrie Register*, some changes in the nomenclature of a charge after Culloden only mean that the destruction and closing of chapels obliged a Presbyter, while still settled in the same district as before, to gather his people together in some different but neighbouring locality. Kirkhill therefore is identical with Alyth for our present purpose. And, besides these notices of Mr. Crombie in connection with Ordinations in the *Register*, we have also the following brief notices of him in private letters. On Feb. 25th, 1759, the Rev. G. Skene wrote to the Bishop :—

"As for Mr. Cromby, I cannot say whether he is in the land of the living or not, for about six months ago . . . I wrote him twice . . . but I've never yet heard directly from him."

"I also wrote him at your desire to make a proper Application to the Managers of the Fund at Edinburgh which I hope he has done, but I cannot tell, nor do I know, with what success."

And the Rev. J. Hill addressing the Bishop on July 16th of the same year, said :—

"Mr. Crombie [is] in his old, complaining way."

(3) *Ardrie-dynat*. We have only the following quaint mention of this charge :—

" Mr. Robertson has in a great measure stopt [officiating] entirely, and very rarely, if at all, admits any to his House. Mr. Stewart tells me they all communicate with him [at Blair Athol], *this being an expense Mr. Robertson never was at with his hearers.*"

No wonder Mr. Lyon wrote to the Bishop on Dec. 29, 1747 :—

" George Robertson Ardrie-dynat, I cannot make out ! "

(4) *Balgowan*. After the Rising, the Rev. George Innes, who it is to be presumed acted both as Presbyter and Tutor here, moved to Perth. In 1748, the Laird died and on Sept. 22nd, of that year the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

" Honest Balgowan ! *Requiescat !* "

The name which follows in place of Mr. Innes is that of Mr. Thom, who, it seems, was a young Layman, looking forward to Ordination. On Oct. 30th, 1750, Mr. Innes wrote thus to the Bishop :—

" As to my not seeing you at Balgowan that day we parted, it was nine at night before I got clear of my Marriage folks. . . . I am so very seldom at Balgowan that I cannot promise to do anything with Mr. Thom. However, the first time I go there I will sound his Inclinations and, if I find that he lies open to convictions, shall not be wanting on my part."

On Oct. 8th, 1755, we have another glimpse of Mr. Thom which shews that by this time he was now already, or at any rate shortly about to be, in Holy Orders. Bishop Falconar wrote thus to Bishop Alexander :—

" Mr. Law, Leith, told me last week that he was informed that Mr. Tom at Balgowan was invited to accept the charge of Pittenweem."

As we have just seen, Mr. Arthur Petrie accepted the Tutorship as a Layman on Sept. 6th, 1757, but stayed only a very short time.

(5) *Blacklunans*.<sup>1</sup> It seems as if this charge had hitherto been under the care of the Rev. F. Crombie of Alyth ; but now, owing to the increasing feebleness of that Presbyter, a younger man was ordained as his assistant in this district :—

The Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie made the following entry in his *Session Book* on Oct. 9th, 1749 :—" I baptized George Skene, an adult Person." This means that the latter had been baptized amongst the Presbyterians, but that now at the age of 22 (for he was born in 1727) he had changed his views and, influenced by the teaching prevalent among the Bishops and their

<sup>1</sup> In Glen Shee.

followers, had become persuaded that only a duly ordained Priest had authority to administer the first Sacrament. The Rev. J. Hill, having performed this sacred office for him, continued to be his friend, and under the date Oct. 11, 1750, there occurs the following entry in the Diocesan *Register* :—

“ *Alloa.* Mr. George Skene in Kinloch, having given proof of his Qualifications, was ordained Deacon to serve the Ministry in Blacklunans in the Chapel there [*i.e.* in Alloa] ; present Mr. Crombie in Kirkhill and Mr. James Hill in Whiteloch, *Priests.*”

It will be noticed as characteristic of the time that only four persons were present at the Ordination Service. Three days after receiving the Laying on of hands, Mr. Skene officiated for Mr. Hill at Whiteloch.<sup>1</sup>

After staying at Blacklunans for four and a half years, he resigned the charge, having been appointed to succeed Dean Seton at Forfar in 1745, whereupon the Blacklunans people were left without a settled Pastor. The following extracts are allusions to their affairs during the vacancy. On Feb. 14th, 1755, the Rev. George Innes wrote thus (rather obscurely) to the Bishop :—

“ I formerly wrote you of Mr. Skene and the People he left, but I have hitherto found none [*i.e.* no opportunity of going to them] ; but, if these People had been willing, they could have called at [*i.e.* on] *me* (as Mr. Murray of Soilery promised they should do) for your Answer ; for People from that Country [*i.e.* Blacklunans], as I hear, have been in Perthshire, so that for me [*i.e.* since they did not call on me when they were here], the affair rests just where it was.”

He wrote again on Apr. 16th :—

“ What Mr. Skene’s old Friends are doing, I know not, for none of them have written me since the last Account I sent you. I wrote to Mr. Skene himself, but he has not thought proper to give me any Answer.”

But he had better news to communicate on Sept. 15th :—<sup>2</sup>

“ One of the Gentlemen of the Glenisla Congregation came to me a few days ago and desired me in the name of that Society to thank you for the Supply you have sent them. He promises that he will make good the £6 to such Clergy as supply them.”

(6) *Blair-Athol.* We are glad to find that the Rev. Walter Stewart, the Presbyter here, who suffered such harsh imprisonment in Perth in 1756-7, was able to resume the exercise of his

<sup>1</sup> Blairgowrie Session Book.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Hist. Perth*, p. 208.

Ministry after his release. On Oct. 20th, 1759, the Rev. J. Hill wrote to the Bishop :—

“ Mr. Walter Stewart and his family are well and desire to be remembered to you. He still continues to officiate as usual. . . . His Grace has nominated Mr. Stewart's Son<sup>1</sup> for a Lieutenant in the new Levies, and he is busy recruiting. This is a kind of compensation of the Father's usage.”

Yes, and it shews that it was as a persecuted Churchman, and not as a political rebel that the old man had “ resisted unto bonds.”

(7) *Blairgowrie*. It is interesting to find that, in the years which immediately followed the battle of Culloden, the Rev. James Hill, the Presbyter, being “ sore let and hindered ” in his pastoral activities, was much engaged in literary pursuits. The Rev. Robert Lyon was zealously performing the pious work of preparing certain MSS. of the late revered Bishop Rattray for the press. In his correspondence with Bishop Alexander from 1746 to 1749 he mentions the *Instructions concerning the Christian Covenant* ; the *Essay on the Nature of the Church* ; the *Essay on the Nature of Man* ; the *Letter on Confirmation* ; the work *On the Middle State* and the *Forms of Prayer* as passing through his hands, and it was in connection with these publications that Mr. Hill found scope for his literary efforts. This he did partly by consulting the Bishop's son, Mr. James Rattray of Craighall, who, moved by filial piety, was much interested in the matter ; partly by copying out MSS. for Mr. Lyon, particularly the *Letter on Confirmation* and partly by translating the Greek and Latin passages quoted in Bishop Rattray's writings. On Dec. 17th, 1748, for example, Mr. Lyon wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

“ I wish that Mr. Hill could be persuaded by you now in Winter to make a Translation of every Greek and Latin word in the Text and Notes of the *Essay on the Nature of Man* and you or he send it to me. . . . Mr. Hill promised to copy out for me several other little things of R[atray]'s. I beg of you to put him in mind, with my best Wishes and Respects to him and all his Parish.”

The miscellaneous volume was at last out early in 1749, but on Apr. 13th, Mr. Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

“ The *Instructions* do not sell in London. Strahan had not put off 25, when I was there a week before Passion Week. No help ; if they do not sell, I can send you them down to be given to proper persons *gratis*.”

<sup>1</sup> This Son became a Captain in the 42nd. Besides him, Mr. Stewart had two daughters, one married to M'Duff of the M'Duffs of Balinloan in Strathbarn ; the other Miss Betty Urchill, strong-minded, clever but eccentric.” *B's Kilmaveonaig* p. 74.

Of course the principal reason why the book would not sell was the fact that it was not judged on its merits. At the time, when it appeared, no serious theological treatise written by a Non-juring Jacobite, and especially if he were a Scot, had the slightest chance of being attended to. By some extraordinary twist in the threads of destiny, which to us northern "Episcopalians" is discouraging and unexpected, as coming from those whom we regard as our own familiar friends, occasionally a sound English Churchman, will be found to show himself prejudiced against that Communion which suffered most during the 18th century in defending the common faith. It would have given Mr. Lyon, Mr. Hill, and Bishop Alexander some comfort could they have foreseen that the book, which was so neglected in their own day was destined to be reprinted somewhat more than a century later (*i.e.* in 1854) by that eminent patristic scholar, the Rev. George Forbes, of Burntisland, with the following prefatory note:—

"Earnestly do I trust that in these days of development and change, when our native, traditional theology seems in no small danger of being quite forgotten, the calm, deep learning of these admirable works may be the means of recalling earnest minds to the landmarks which our fathers set up."

Turning now from Mr. Hill's literary pursuits, we proceed to his ministerial activities. In Ch. XII. we saw how his Meeting House was destroyed in 1746 and himself impeded by the penal laws of 1746 and 1748 from tending his people as before. Nevertheless he did faithfully continue to care for them according to his opportunities. Though he could no longer gather them all together either in the Chapel or elsewhere, he proceeded to collect handfals of them in such manner as he could, and to read the Church's Morning and Evening Services with them. Between the first and second penal law he did so at Craighall, Ardblair, Kinloch, Delvine, Glasclune, Innach, West and East Gourdie, Meikleour, Pindreich, and Kirktown of Lethendy; but, as we have seen, after the passing of the second Act, even so much became impossible. At all events, whilst the first terror of this Act was fresh, he entirely confined his ministrations to his own house at Whiteloch. It is evident, however, that, as time went on, he gathered courage, and by 1756, resumed the practice, which ruled his conduct from 1746 to 1748.

He celebrated the Holy Communion with considerable frequency, sometimes more than once during the week, and sometimes allowing several weeks to elapse between the administrations.

It is noteworthy that, whereas previous to 1746 the phrase which he mostly used in making his entries was *Sacrament administered*, after that year he employs the title *Holy Eucharist*.

Perhaps the explanation is to be found in the fact that, so long as the scene of his Celebrations was the public Meeting-House, he simply adhered to the ordinary way of speaking, but, when he came to administer the sacred Rite more frequently in the private oratory at Craighall than elsewhere, the Rattray influence and manner became predominant.

The Baptisms for the years, dealt with in this chapter, numbered 100, and yielded an annual average of 7. There were 3 Marriages in 1751-1754. As for Confirmations, we have evidence of considerable boldness on the part of the Bishop and Mr. Hill. Despite the threatenings of the law, the Apostolic Ordinance was administered with courageous regularity, even during the darkest period. This is proved by the following extracts from the *Blairgowrie Session Book* :—

" July 5th, 1747. Holy Eucharist administered at Craighall. This day Bishop Alexander confirmed Marjory Rattray and four others.

Aug. 7th, 1748. Bishop Alexander baptized and confirmed at Craighall Jean Ogilvy.

Sep. 2nd, 1750. At Whiteloch, Bishop Alexander confirmed Thomas Rattray and James Galloway at [*i.e.* of] Craighall, Catherine Ogilvy at Glasclune, Thomas Mitchell, John Hill [the Presbyter's son ?], and Hugh Greenhill at Whiteloch, Barbara Mackerson, and Euphemia Low at Dungarthil.

Oct. 4, 1753. Confirmed at Pindreich, Robert and Margaret Mercer.

Oct. 30th, 1753. Confirmed at Whiteloch by Bishop Alexander, David Robertson of Bleaton, Anne Clarke, Jean Blair, Elz. Robertson, being all baptized that morning ; also confirmed William Husband and Elizabeth Husband, his Dau[ghter].

June 25th, 1756. Bishop Alexander confirmed (nine candidates).

July 23rd, 1758. Whiteloch, Bishop Alexander confirmed John and James Hill (and nine other candidates).

Mr. Hill used prayers for the departed. This appears at the deaths of his daughter, his father, and his mother, respectively on May 10th, 1746, April 15th, 1751, and March 17th, 1758, to the entry of whose funerals he appends the words :—*Requiescant in Pace + Christi. Amen.*

Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, and Good Friday were observed.

Our Presbyterian attended Ordinations<sup>1</sup> in the Bishop's Chapel at Alloa on Oct. 11th, 1750 ; March 5th, 1751 ; March 5th, 1752 ; March 14th, 1753 ; and April 16th, 1760.

On Feb. 25th, 1759, the Rev. G. Skene represents Mr. Hill as trying to bring influence to bear on Lord Halkerstone to induce him to stop prosecuting the Rev. J. Strachan of Laurencekirk for conducting public worship.

On July 16th, 1759, Mr. Hill wrote to the Bishop :—

“ I should have been happy in seeing you here this Summer, but, as it seems to be inconvenient for yourself and no pressing Occasion for your Presence in the District, I shall not insist on a Right (?) though I have several Converts who want Confirmation.”

In the same letter, however, there was news, significant at last of a softening in the administration of the penal laws, and sufficient, one would have thought, to tempt the Bishop to Blairgowrie (or was it Gourdie now ?) :—

“ I've got a decent and commodious House on Sunday, which in good Weather is pretty well filled, though it is 50 ft. by 16 ft., plenished with furms and some Pews, Pulpit, and Altar, and as many glass windows, as the Laws allows Duty free. Mr. Skene has been in this Country for two weeks and is pretty well.”

(8) *Carsebank*. From the copious collection of letters addressed by the Rev. Robert Lyon to Bishop Alexander, it is evident that, like the Rev. J. Hill of Blairgowrie, the Rev. David Guthrie of Carsebank was an able and well-read man. For instance on Aug. 24th, 1756, Mr. Lyon wrote :—

“ You need not fear that ever any Challenge will go from me to D[avid] G[uthrie], except in the way of Joke. . . . From our friend, David, everything is valuable.”

About this time, as has been already stated, Mr. Lyon was writing much to Bishop Alexander in praise of the New Hutchinsonian theology.<sup>2</sup> The names of Benjamin Holloway, Bates, Hodge, Kennedy, Robinson, and other authors in connection with it are perpetually recurring in his letters.<sup>3</sup> Now about the year 1752 he was very anxious to obtain a competent opinion upon the

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

<sup>2</sup> Explained in Chap. VI. of Bp. Watson.

<sup>3</sup> In an MS. Sermon of 1787 by Bishop Watson of Dunkeld, who was himself a Hutchinsonian, occurs the following passage :—“ And I trust that while sound principle and sacred learning are cherished amongst us, the pleasing and learned Holloway, the affectionate Patten, the mild and amiable Hodges, the excellent Comings, the elegant and accomplished [Bp.] Horne [of Norwich], the zealous, honest, Bate, and the inimitable Jones, are names, that will be had in remembrance.”

work of the fourth-named of these authors upon Old Testament Chronology, and it was to our friend at Restenneth that he turned for that of which he was in search. He requested Mr. Guthrie to give him a criticism on Kennedy. On Nov. 16th, 1752, he told Bishop Alexander that he had received a letter from our Presbyter, and, having shewed it to Bishop Gordon, had heard that Prelate exclaim that "he had seen the Spirit of a true Christian Priest." And then the following passages occur in his letters:—

" Jan. 13, 1753. I long for honest D[avid] G[uthrie]'s report on Kennedy. I refrain myself from dipping [*i.e.* into K.'s book] till I see what David says.

" March 3, 1753. Let honest David take his own time, I shall be fond to see his opinion. . . . I demurred to one particular *i.e.* to his [*i.e.* Kennedy's] making the Age of the Patriarchs, as recorded by Moses, to the death of Joseph, an exact measure of Time.

" July 6th, 1753. Still 'looking in vain for David Guthrie's Essay on Kennedy.'

" Oct. 23rd, 1753. I was so well pleased with Kennedy's *Conclusions* . . . that I still wished his scheme might be found true, though I had the less hopes after D[avid] G[uthrie] had carefully examined and declared against it.

" Jan. 17th, 1754. The excellent [Bp.] G[ordon] was so anxious to see D[avid] G[uthrie]'s Paper that, after receiving a Copy from you, I scarcely took time to read it over, before sending it to him. . . . A Copy was sent to Kennedy pretty quickly.

" Feb. 13th, 1754. You have seen honest D[avid] G[uthrie] in print and are satisfied, I hope, that he has got fair play, but no Curiosity appears even in that affair. The Pamphlet lies uncalled for, after being advertized over and over in the daily papers, nor have I yet heard K[ennedy]'s being in any forwardness to explain himself, which I wish he may be able to do, so as to satisfy honest D.G.

" April 5, 1754. K[ennedy]'s reply to D[avid] G[uthrie] was expected when I left Town. If the public takes any notice of that Reply, it may also possibly call for honest D[avid] G[uthrie]'s pretty little Thing, but hitherto there is no appearance of its ever paying the paper, to say nothing of the print, far less of its bringing Hat or Glove to the Author."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In connection with Mr. Lyon's statements about the difficulty of selling Bp. Rattray's and Mr. Guthrie's works, I recall the following remark made to me by Bishop Wordsworth in August 1890:—"We Episcopalians may write as well as you like, but we have not got hold of the machinery which brings people forward in this Country."—*Scottish Standard Bearer*, 1913, p. 103.

There was another author concerning whom Mr. Lyon appealed to Mr. Guthrie for a well-considered opinion. This will appear from the following extract from a letter to Bishop Alexander, dated Restennet, May 29th, 1759 :—

“ I am ashamed to send you my Strictures on the first Volume (or Philosophical Part) of Dr. N. Robinson’s *Christian Philosopher* so blotted and interlined. It is, indeed, the *prima cura*, for a very obliging young man in Forfar [Mr. Brown?], hearing me complain how uneasy it is to my Eyes and Back to write, offered to transcribe two copies for me, which indeed he did. But, as good Memus [*i.e.* Rev. John Ramsay] had served me once before, he made an unintelligible Galimatias by inserting in the Text, at the marks of Reference (which he took to be marks of Induction) a few Notes at the foot of some Pages. Whereupon I scrawled out another Copy . . . for my good friend, Mr. R[obert] L[yon], who desired my Opinion of the Doctor’s Performance.”

Another literary effort made by Mr. Guthrie about this time was the translation of the Greek and Latin quotations in Bishop Rattray’s *Essay of the Nature of Man* :—

“ Dec. 4th, 1750. I had yours [*i.e.* Bp. A.’s] with D[avid] G[uthrie]’s Translations, which are very good, yet do not hinder me from still wishing that the Author himself had condescended to translate.”

Our Presbyterian’s interest in general Church affairs and loyalty to the Bishops comes out in the following, written about the year 1760 :—

“ It is a mortifying reflection that our most holy Religion should be exposed by its best Defenders and that a set of Presbyters [*i.e.* those in Edinburgh] should act in direct Contempt and Opposition to all the Episcopal Authority in the Nation. I should not be very much surprised though the Junto should pretend to *consecrate*, as well as elect, Mr. R[obertson], as they invaded the Prerogative of our spiritual Fathers in transporting Mr. H[arper], junior [*i.e.* from Bothkennar to a charge in Edinburgh].”

In 1754 Mr. Guthrie received the highest recognition which it was in the power of his Bishop to give. On Feb. 13th of that year, Dean Seton, his neighbour in Forfar, died, and he was promoted to succeed him in the Decanal office.

The only allusions to his pastoral work which are forthcoming at this period, are the mention of a Mr. Smith, who intended to take Holy Orders,<sup>1</sup> and of the Confirmation of a lady in the Carsebank district who had previously been a Roman Catholic. He

<sup>1</sup> A Mr. William Smith was subsequently ordained in 1761.

seems also (it is to be presumed as Dean) to have had the duty laid upon him of forwarding their shares of the general fund, administered by the Bishops, to the several Clergy of the Diocese. On March 29th, 1759, he wrote to the Bishop :—

“ I did not think fit to send my Brethren their Quotas, unless I had been sure of a safe Conveyance, because Money has miscarried several times in this Neighbourhood, particularly a Bank-note of £5 stg. was taken out of a letter to Inshuan and the Letter sealed up again and forwarded to Achleuchie not very long ago. The gentleman was so lucky as to recover his money without noise. For fear of such accident I wrote next day after receipt of yours to Messieurs Hill, Crombie, and Lyall and got Mr. Hill and Mr. Crombie's Receipts as soon as their affairs could allow them to come this length. Inshuan did me the favour to procure Mr. Lyall's and Mr. Skene's.”

His friends evidently thought that he himself would be none the worse of some addition to his income. That appears from what he wrote to the Bishop on Jan. 5th, 1759 :—

“ I was very much surprised with a letter from Dr. Abernethie of the 13th December last, acquainting me that at a Meeting of the Administration of the Fund last week it was agreed to give me 40 sh. stg., a Resource I never dreamed of and for which I never made any Application, directly or indirectly, nor ever would without your knowledge and permission.”

On May 29th of the same year also he received £5 from the Rev. Robert Lyon, or rather through that Presbyter from his Patron, Mr. Bowdler, and indeed these additions to his resources came in very acceptably for, as he explained to the Bishop, the money :—

“ Enables me to repair my House in the utmost Hazard of tumbling about our Ears, the Wind having broken three contiguous Couples.”

Nor, if Mr. Lyon may be believed, was his house the only thing that was decrepit about him. His own limbs were giving way :—

“ Honest David Guthrie ! He is not, I fancy, much older than I. Our leggs pinched both of us long ago, yet, blessèd be God, mine serve me still a mile or two without grumbling ! ”

Still, it appears, he was stronger in some respects than others :

“ Jan. 5th, 1759. The epidemical cold continues to rage in this Country. All my Family have been very distressed with it, excepting myself, who have hitherto enjoyed a constant tract of good Health.”

We are glad to hear that this state of affairs continued. On Feb. 25th, Mr. Skene told the Bishop that "Our worthy Dean holds out wonderfully."

At the conclusion of a letter written at this time he gives us a passing glimpse into his family circle :—

"My Wife and Sister offer their most respectful Compliments [to the Bishop] and humbly beg the Continuation of your fatherly Benediction and Prayers, as I do for them and myself and all the People, who are under [my] Charge."

(9) *Dunkeld and Logie*. Things were "difficult" at the present time in this Congregation. It constituted part of the charge (along with Nairne) of Mr. Abernethy. In October, 1746, he removed his lodging from Logie and shortly afterwards severed his connection with Dunkeld altogether. Hereupon the Rev. G. Innes of Perth did his best to help the Bishop to tide over the vacancy. On Oct. 30th, 1750, he wrote :—

"I have seen the folks about Dunkeld and make no doubt of success, and, the sooner one is provided for them, so much the better ; but I hope you will forgive me if I say Mr. A[bernethy] is not the properest person in the world for that Charge. I am afraid his dictatorial forward way will not take there—I mean at and about Dunkeld."

On Nov. 9th, he wrote again but more anxiously :—

"I am afraid some of them are wavering already, and I have the more need of a proper person to keep them steady. It is not in my power to do them any service in my present condition. I have enough to do at home to take care of my own people."

By Nov. 27th, his anxiety had increased further :—

"I am still of opinion there is danger of the Dunkeld people."

The risk was that, since the malcontent Congregation in Perth had by this time joined the ranks of the "Qualified" and were praying for King George, they might take advantage of the continued vacancy at Dunkeld and provide the people there with Services in defiance of the Bishop. The latter was indeed at last able to suggest the name of the Rev. David Lyon as successor of Mr. Abernethy, but Mr. Innes informed him that, however that Presbyterian might do for Nairne, he would never satisfy the Dunkeld people, least of all Logie. And so the dreaded raid of the Perth Qualified actually took place :—

"Dec. 31st, 1750. I should be glad my Friend's settlement in the district should take place, but am afraid the Encouragement [*i.e.* stipend] here will not answer Expectation. My neighbour [*i.e.* Mr. Wood, the Qualified Clergyman in

Perth] has been in D[unkeld] with a great attendance from hence beating up for Recruits and I am afraid he has had too good success. On the Saturday before he went up I saw a Gentleman near Dunkeld and his Lady at a place where I was visiting. They spoke nothing of it to me, but could not be prevailed upon to stay next day but hurried home, which I suspect was to meet the above person."

After this there is a gap in our information of about nine years. When the curtain rises again, we get the impression that the Bishop's Clergy had been holding on with difficulty and that the Qualified people were now in the ascendent. On Oct. 9, 1759, the Rev. J. Hill wrote from Gourdie to the Bishop:—

"A Qualified man came to Dunkeld last week and, I hear, is to officiate by turns, one Sunday there, one near Lude, and the third half-way 'twixt these places. All are to join him except my good friend, Mrs. Mary at Rinrorie, who tells me she has met with no importunity since you was there."

What with the penal laws sadly limiting his powers, and the Qualified Clergy making raids upon his people, Bishop Alexander was certainly engaged in no easy task in trying to keep his flock together!

(10) *Forfar*. In a letter dated Jan. 1st, 1750, Dean Seton informed the Bishop that he had administered the Holy Communion at Christmas to 50 persons,<sup>1</sup> which, considering the severity with which the persecution had been raging in Forfar, was a very satisfactory number.

But on Jan. 17th, 1754, the Rev. R. Lyon had occasion to write thus to our Bishop:—

"I am concerned for your honest Dean and . . . humbly commend him to God and his Grace."

And then the following entry occurs in the *Dunkeld Register*:—

"The Very Rev. Mr. William Seaton, Dean of the District of Dunkeld, died at his house in Forfar, Feb. 13th, 1754, in the 75th year of his Age."

He had served the Church faithfully in this portion of the vineyard, and upon him had fallen the full brunt of the persecution. As we have seen, his Meeting House was forcibly closed, his cabinet rifled, himself imprisoned, further threats levelled at him after his release. He was surrounded by soldiers "on the catch," frightened by the trial of Rev. H. Edgar in Forfar, and his Congregation reduced at one time to six or eight women. His memory,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gordon's M.S.

therefore, is worthy of honour, as that of a Confessor. He was at once succeeded :—

“ In his charge at Forfar by the Rev. Mr. George Skene, who was transferred from Blacklunans<sup>1</sup> and collated to Forfar, S. Peter's Day, 29th June, 1754.”<sup>2</sup>

The new Incumbent had to “ put a stout back to a stiff brae.” In the first place the active enforcement of the penal laws had not yet quite ceased,<sup>3</sup> and also, as we have seen, the congregation had almost dwindled to nothing. The old Dean's *Baptismal Register* had disappeared—no doubt when the soldiers invaded his house—and Mr. Skene started a new one. From this we have further evidence of how low the number of Church people had sunk. The Baptisms for the first few years read as follows :—

In 1754 there was 1 Baptism.

„ 1755 „ „ 1 „

„ 1756 „ „ 4 „

„ 1757 „ „ 1 „

---

Total, 7

Our Presbyterian's energy, however, soon began to tell, and the entries shew a gratifying increase :—

In 1758 there were 18 Baptisms.

„ 1759 „ „ 13 „

„ 1760 „ „ 26 „

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Total, 57

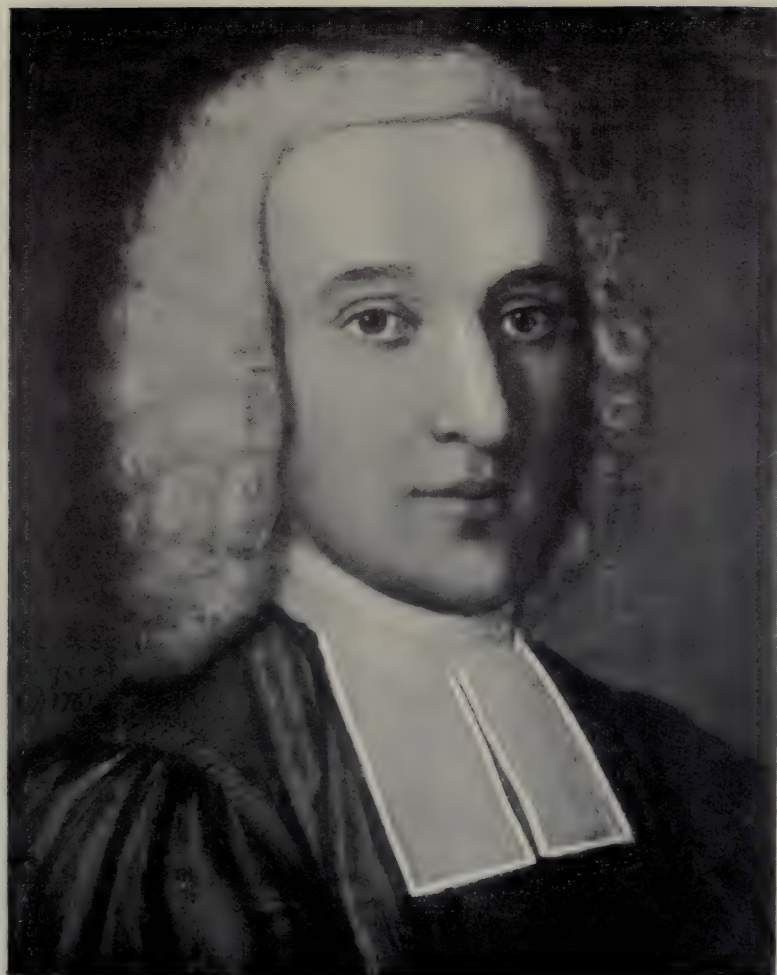
and in the last of these years no less than eleven of the candidates were adults, which shews that the zealous Pastor was attracting even Presbyterians into the fold.

A letter from him to the Bishop, dated Feb. 25th, 1759, gives us an interesting glimpse of a certain matter of this kind in his congregation. A Forfar young man, James Brown by name, who had originally been a Presbyterian, but who came over to Mr. Skene's flock about this time, engaged himself as assistant master in Mr. Ker's school. Every difficulty, however, was thrown in his way on account of the change in his Church position. Naturally, therefore, Mr. Skene and also Mr. Hill of Blairgowrie, who were both interested in his case, exerted themselves to extend as much encouragement to him as they could, especially as he was a promising youth, and inclined to present himself for Ordination. Their first object was to get him away from the “ Qualified ” Clergyman's school and settled as a private tutor in a Church family. They failed to induce the Balgowan people, who “ were

<sup>1</sup> See (5) of this Chapter.

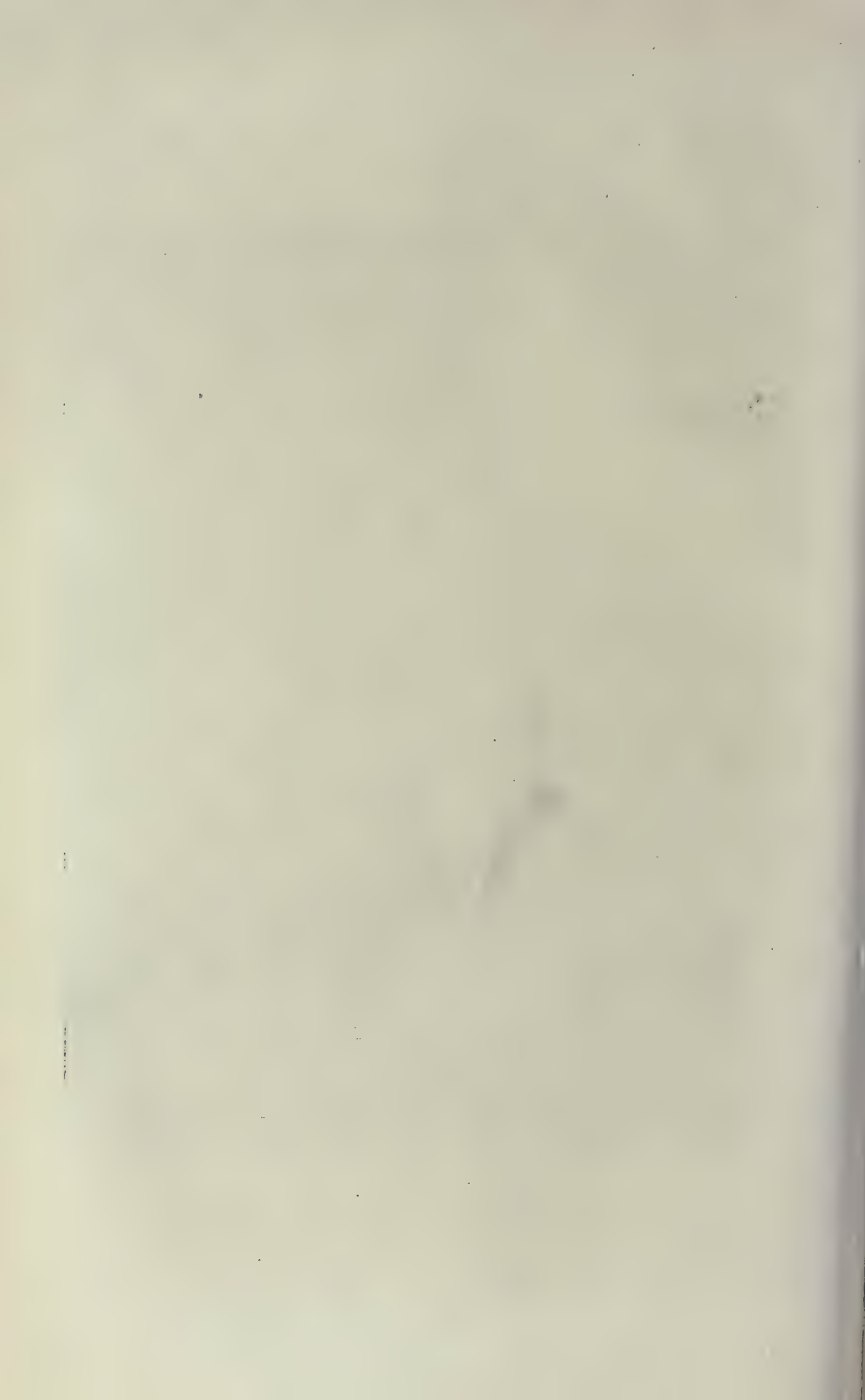
<sup>2</sup> D. R.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 123.



DEAN SKENE.

*[Reprinted from "Scottish Standard Bearer."]*



too nice " to engage him (perhaps on account of his broad Scots accent), and it was at this point that Mr. Skene wrote the letter to which we have alluded, in which he said :—

" I've now no difficulty with him but the procuring him a comfortable place. I have put proper books in his hands, which he has perused to my satisfaction. . . . What a Pity it is to lose one of so pregnant Parts and virtuous Disposition in our present Necessity ! "

A letter from the Rev. J. Hill, dated July 16th, 1759, carries the matter a step further :—

" I . . . had occasion (he says) to see Mr. Brown at Forfar, though little time to converse with him ; but from what I can observe and from Mr. Skene's character of him I hope he will prove useful and answer Expectancy. He applies himself with great diligence and gives a good account of what Books are put in his Hands. He is now a little acquainted with the Dean [Guthrie], who is fond of him, but yet he [Brown] seldom ventures to visit him or Mr. Skene, while he remains under the watchful eye of Mr. Ker. He is to give up his School in a few weeks, after which I expect him here [*i.e.* at Blairgowrie] for some time, there being a near Relation betwixt him and me. Poor Lad, he has a Mother and Sister, whose Bread in a manner depends on him, and therefore it will be inconvient for him to be long unprovided. He is well founded in the Latin and Greek, and I hope will soon pick up a Stock of good Principles, and, as he is naturally bashful, I hope he will behave with prudence. . . . If Mr. Brown answers my Expectations [*i.e.* passes his Trials], I may possibly have the Pleasure of seeing you in Alloa [*i.e.* at the Ordination]. "

On Oct. 30th, 1759, Mr. Hill again wrote to the Bishop :—

" As my friend, Mr. Brown, had not the happiness to be initiate into the Church in his Infancy, he went last week with Mr. Skene to Dundee, to be confirmed. Mr. Skene wrote me that your Brother [*i.e.* Bp. Rait] was surly and captious at first, but, on seeing and conversing with Mr. Brown, he surprised them both, urging him to accept the late Mr. Rose's Charge in Glenesk. Mr. Brown gave him no answer till he should have my advice. "

In the end it was decided that it was not prudent to accept Bishop Rait's kind offer :—

Accordingly Mr. Hill wrote thus to the Bishop :—

" Glenesk is improper for Mr. Brown. It is too near Mr. Ker in Forfar, who would exert himself to disturb him, and all the people there are under the Management of Mr. Garden, Factor for the forfeited Estates, who has threatened Mr.

Brown for rejecting some offers he made him some years ago, when he was in his Service during the College vacancy [*i.e.* vacation]. Mr. Garden urged him to swallow some Government Pills, that he might have acted under him in the Management of one of his Factories, and he now threatens to resent his refusal, so that it would be imprudent to settle Mr. Brown where he has any influence.”<sup>1</sup>

We have the following additional evidence, over and above what comes out in Mr. Brown’s case, that Mr. Skene’s removal to Forfar did not interrupt his old friendship with Mr. Hill.

In the *Blairgowrie Session Book* the following entry occurs :—  
“ July 30th, 1758. I officiated at Forfar for Mr. Skene.”

In a letter dated July 8th, 1759, Mr. Hill said :—

“ I exchanged Pulpits with Mr. Skene.”

And, as these further extracts from the *Session Book* shew, Mr. Skene on his side must have spent not less than a week at Blairgowrie at this time :—

“ July 8th, 1759. Mr. Skene officiated at Muirton.

July 13th, 1759. Jno. Chapman, Surgeon at Blairgowrie, was baptised by Mr. Skene.

July 15th, 1759. Mr. Skene officiated at Muirton.”

(11) *Fortingal*. In the absence of other information it is tempting to suppose that the reference in the following extract from a letter of the Rev. G. Innes of Perth, dated Nov. 27th, is to the Presbyterian of Fortingal :—

“ I had yours of the 24th from Edinburgh with one enclosed for Mr. Cameron, which I shall convey to him by the first opportunity.”

The Rev. J. Hill in his letter of Oct. 20th, 1759, after mentioning the Rev. Walter Stewart of Blair Athol, gives us the following glimpse of Mr. Cameron in the exercise of that itinerant Ministry, which his district required :—

“ And Mr. Cameron perseveres in his wandering way from place to place.”

(12) *Kirriemuir*. The last mention of the Rev. William Gray, Presbyterian here, occurred, as we said above, in the *Dunkeld Register* immediately before the cataclysm, *i.e.* on April 30th, 1745, at the “ Tryals ” of Mr. Charles Rose at Memus. Like the Rev. Laurence Drummond of Perth, he never reappears in its pages. His name occurs, however, in a letter addressed by the Rev. R. Lyon to the Bishop on Christmas Eve, 1747. Mr. Lyon is engaged in trying to persuade the Bishops to appoint a lay

<sup>1</sup> For Mr. Brown’s Ordination see Ch. XVI.

committee to relieve them of the practical work of the distribution of the Church Fund, and one of his arguments is that there would be less grumbling amongst the Clergy if it were divided by business men, who were not in personal contact with them as the Bishops were, but to whom the latter would give advice "behind the curtain." And in this connection he brings in Mr. Gray's name thus :—

"Your own Bairns [*i.e.* the Clergy] as good [Bp.] G[erard] calls them, would take very patiently from others what they would complain of from you ; witness, for one, honest William Gray, whose Complaint, I hope, proceeded from no other Motive but from his wishing to have had so much more to give to those that need."

From these words we gain a pleasing, though somewhat amusing, glimpse of Mr. Gray's character, and also infer that he lived on into the period with which we are dealing.

Inasmuch, however, as Mr. Lyon does not use the present tense in describing our Presbyterian's grumblings, but the past, it is evident that he has his recent death in mind, and indeed the Rev. A. Livingstone wrote to the Bishop on March 8th, 1748 :—

"The Country about (?) Kirriemuir has great loss by the deaths of Sir John and Mr. Gray."

How the Services were carried on for the next three years is matter for conjecture, but it seems reasonable to suppose that the neighbouring Clergy, especially the Rev. John Ramsay of Memus, lent their assistance. On March 5th, 1751, however, we have the following entry in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

"*Alloa.* Mr. William Walker at Camney, after previous Tryals by the Clergy, was ordained Deacon with a view to the Charge at Kirriemuir in the Bishop's Chapel there [*i.e.* at Alloa], present Mr. Francis Crombie at Kirkhill and Mr. James Hill at Whiteloch, Priests.

In this Service we have another instance in which the Congregation was strictly limited to the legal number, *i.e.* Bishop, Candidate, and two assisting Presbyters.

A few notices of Mr. Walker remain. On March 22nd, 1752, we read in Mr. Hill's *Session Book* :—"Mr. Walker officiated at Whiteloch." On March 3rd, 1753, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

"I am not ill-pleased that Mr. Walker had petitioned and (I presume) got himself classed [*i.e.* for the Fund] before your letter reached him."

And the following notice occurs in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

" March 14th, 1753. Wednesday of Ember Week in Lent, 1753, Mr. William Walker, Deacon, was ordained Priest in the Chapel there [*i.e.* in Alloa] for the Charge at Kirriemuir, present Mr. James Hill in Whiteloch and Mr. George Skene at Enoch, Priests."

Still another instance of a Congregation restricted to four. On April 26th, 1753, Mr. Lyon alludes both to Mr. Walker's enrolment on the Fund, and also his ordination as Priest :—

" I am right glad that Mr. Walker is enrolled both Ways, and agreeably surprised that the Fund keeps up so as to be worth looking after."

On Jan. 24th, May 9th, Oct. 8th, and Dec. 24th, 1754, Mr. Walker wrote to the Bishop from Kirriemuir concerning various matters, amongst others that Mr. Skene was doing well at Forfar ; that he had heard of a candidate for Ordination, and that he himself had journeyed to S. Andrews.

But alas ! this hopeful young Presbyterian was soon cut off. The *Dunkeld Register* has this entry :—

" The Rev. Mr. William Walker died in Kirriemuir on . . . . (sic) 1755."

We can do something towards filling in the blank date from letters. The Rev. Robert Forbes wrote to Bishop Alexander on Feb. 20th, 1756 :—

" I am sorry for the death of my friend, Mr. Walker,"

and we can come even closer to it than that, for on Christmas Eve, 1755, the Rev. W. Abernethy mentions the sad event, and again the Rev. John Ramsay alludes to it in a letter dated Dec. 13th.

It being now necessary to fill the vacancy, there seems to have been some thought of bringing in the Rev. Robert Forbes. At all events that Presbyterian wrote to the Bishop on Feb. 20th, 1756 :—

" I wish I had been able to supply his [*i.e.* Mr. Walker's] place, not for the sake of the Gain or Encouragement, but because I am sensible that it will be difficult to get it supplied."

A satisfactory settlement, however, was made before very long.

The Rev. James Lyall was transferred from Carcary,<sup>1</sup> near Montrose, on S. Luke's day (Oct. 18th) 1756, and instituted to the combined charge of Kirriemuir and Cortachy. The only other mention of this Presbyterian during the present period, which survives, was made by Mr. Skene, who wrote to the Bishop on Feb. 25th, 1759 :—" I hear by the bye that Mr. Lyall is well."

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

(13) *Memus*. Over and above the Rev. John Ramsay's allusion to the troubles of the day, which is given in the last chapter, all that we hear of him at this time is very little. On Christmas Eve, 1747, the Rev. Robert Lyon made the laconic remark in a letter to the Bishop:—"Memus I know." On March 16th, 1750, Mr. Ramsay himself wrote to his superior answering some questions about pluralities and the Deeside Clergy at the Revolution; on June 14th he wrote another letter mentioning the Bishop's illness and his own clerical duties, and on Sept. 29th, Dec. 3rd, and Dec. 13th, about adjustment of affairs and supply of Charges.

The *Dunkeld Register* simply states that he "died on—1756," after which Memus seems to have been merged in Kirriemuir and Cortachy.

(14) *Nairne*. The Rev. W. Abernethy, as we have seen, ministered here probably from his ordination as Deacon on May 30th, 1744, and certainly from his Ordination as Priest on Dec. 19th of the same year. We have not much detail about his Pastorate, but on Oct. 28th, 1746, about six months after Culloden, he himself gives us a glimpse into his position in the following words:—

"I am to remove this week from Logie and board to my Lady Dowager Nairne, being the most central. . . . It will appear from my Letters of Collation . . . that I was not designed to be Chaplain to either of their families, but chosen to be Pastor of the Congregations frequenting the Chapel and Logie-Almond."

This rather sounds as if, in accordance with his natural bent, he were holding his head high amongst them, and that in consequence there were difficulties. At all events there can be no doubt his connection with the charge was severed at this time.<sup>1</sup> On May 7th, and Oct. 30th, 1750, the Rev. G. Innes of Perth wrote to the Bishop advising him about filling up the vacancy.<sup>2</sup>

"I was at Stanley (he says) last week. My Lady Nairn and people thereabouts are very pressing to have somebody amongst them, and I must own they deserve a Supply, if it was possible to procure one for them."

<sup>1</sup> *Note*.—It is beyond our aim to follow Dr. Abernethy's fortunes in detail but we learn from the letters of the Rev. R. Lyon to our Bishop that in 1749 he was in England acting as Mr. Lyon's *locum tenens* at Stretton, and thereafter looking out, but in vain, for a permanent post amongst the English Nonjurors. He then returned to Scotland and took the degree of M.D. at Edinburgh. There he finally settled. He remained loyal to the Bishops. On April 10th, 1756, Mr. Lyon wrote:—"Abernethy will stand his ground against the Juncto. No fear of him!" On Dec. 22nd, 1756, Arthur Petrie wrote:—"Mr. Abernethy lives at the head of Carrubers' Close."

<sup>2</sup> These quotations from Mr. Innes are from *Ep. Hist. P.*, p. 207-8.

Curiously enough Dr. Abernethy was thought of once more. Perhaps they considered that his visit to England, which had intervened, and his course at the University might have softened the asperities of an otherwise admirable character. Mr. Innes said :—

“ The People of Nairn know him and he might do very well.”

He did not return, however, and the vacancy continued to cause both the Bishop and Mr. Innes much concern. On Nov. 9th, 1750, the latter wrote :—

“ I earnestly wish some fit man could be got soon, otherwise I plainly foresee the affair must drop ; the Nairn people are already disobliged, and, to tell truth, they have had long enough patience.”

On Nov. 27th, he added :—

“ I am nearer those of Nairn and shall not fail in doing all in my power to keep them steady, but am heartily concerned if there is no hopes of their being provided before Summer.”

The Bishop did his best, and proposed a Clergyman, but on Dec. 12th, Mr. Innes replied :—

“ I can say very little with regard to Mr. D[avid] L[yon] ; he might do with the Nairn people,”

and that is the last we hear of Nairn as a separate charge.

(15) *Perth*. A full account of the Rev. G. Innes, the Presbyter here, derived chiefly from his own letters to Bishop Alexander, is given in my *Episcopal History of Perth*, chap. XXI.<sup>1</sup> A few extracts from that follow.

But first some more recently discovered items<sup>2</sup> must be prefixed. In Mr. Hill's *Session Book* we have the following entries :—

“ *March 31, 1745.* Blairgowrie, where Mr. Innes at *Balgowan* officiated, text 2 Cor. v. 20 (‘ Now we are Ambassadors ’)

*Oct. 8, 1748.* Received from the Rev. Mr. Innes at *Perth* £2 Str. as the share allotted me by Bp. Alexander and Mr. Graeme of *Balgowan*, of collections in the family of *Balgowan*.”

These entries are interesting both because they throw a slender light upon the *Perth* congregation at the darkest of all periods, and also because they leave no reasonable doubt that the Mr. Innes of *Balgowan* and the Mr. Innes of *Perth* are one and the same person, and that he moved into the Fair City very soon after the Forty-five, to take up the work of Messrs. L. Drummond and Robert Lyon.

<sup>1</sup> From MSS. letters lent by Rev. Mr. Hawdon.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Blairgowrie Session Book*.

Now, therefore, for the promised extracts. And first with regard to their place of Worship :—

" We have already seen that in 1755 the Congregation were in such fear that they could not pluck up courage to provide themselves with a Meeting House. We must conclude, therefore, that they had more or less recourse to the same expedients which historians tell us were adopted elsewhere."

That is, like Mr. Hill, Mr. Innes must have gone round the district holding Service in different places and using all the expedients to avoid formal violations of the law, which were then in use.

As for the Services themselves, no doubt he had recourse to those contained in the *Book of Common Prayer*, except for the Holy Communion. In that he made an advance upon the practice of his predecessors, for while, as Mr. Lyon told us, they used the English Office in the main, he adopted the Scottish in its entirety. On Sept. 15th, 1755, he wrote to the Bishop :—

" The 50 copies of the *Scots Liturgy* came to my hand this day. What is their price or are they to be given *gratis* ? It is the *Scots Liturgy* that I use, but have been in great want of copies."

Then with regard to his Sermons he lets in an amusing light. On May 21st, 1750, he wrote to the Bishop :—

" My People are continually teizing me for preachings. I have just now little time to write any. It will be a great favour done me if you will send me, or bring with you when you come, 40 or 50 with some *occasional* ones. I promise to be very careful of and punctually return them. I am sure you have numbers to spare ! "

His Church principles were sound. On May 21st, 1750, he wrote :—

" I have been reading Dr. Middleton's *Enquiry into Miraculous Powers*, but I am not pleased with him ; he horribly abuses the Fathers and treats them with the outmost Contempt ; he endeavours to overthrow the credit of all Church history."

Scattered about his letters are many allusions to individual members of his Congregation, which shew that he had a particular interest in each. Here is one not before printed (Dec. 4th, 1750)—

" Perth (people) miss Lady Stormont, so do her own, I suspect. Is this present Methven the same, whom I knew a little 35 years ago ? Or is this the son of that Gentleman and so a Nephew of Peter Smyth ? Indeed I can say nothing but, with you, God strengthen such as do stand."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> T.C. MSS.

And again :—

“ Miss Graeme has been ill of a fever and the nerves and I'm afraid she's not yet out of danger. Mrs. Smythe has likewise had a fever, but is better and like to do well : some others also have been sick that you are not so well acquainted with. I am just come in from attending M. Beilby Blair in her last moments. Poor Mr. Stirling died on Wednesday last and has left behind him a very disconsolate widow.”

Meantime the good Presbyterian felt the touch of poverty (Feb. 5, 1750) :—

“ You see my people are mouldering away and my finances every day growing lower, and, indeed in a little time are like to be scarce worth noticing. Yet I am better content than I thought I could have been on so considerable a reduction. Providence, I hope, will provide.”

He also, like so many of his brethren, was something of an invalid :—

“ I have been so distressed that it has made me forget everything of the kind. My cough still continues. I have gone through all the jargon of the shops. Last time Dr. Bayne and Mr. Wood saw me, I asked what I was to take next. they answered ‘ *Nothing*. You must go to the country for some weeks and, if that does not answer, you must go to Aberdeen, perhaps the journey will do you good, your native air may recover your health.’ ”

*Perth Qualified Chapel.* As we have already seen in this chapter, under the heading of *Dunkeld*, Bishop Alexander was now confronted with the difficulty of a “ Qualified ” Chapel in Perth. It will be remembered that somewhat earlier than David Fyffe in Dundee, the Rev. George Sempil had set up an independent Congregation in the Fair City (1740), but in doing so had not intended to leave the Scottish Episcopal Church or take the oaths to Government. The position of his flock, however, in neither recognising the Scottish Bishops nor submitting to King George, was one impossible to maintain. Accordingly after Prince Charles's failure they definitely split with the Scottish Church and set up as an English Qualified Congregation.

On Nov. 9th, 1750, Mr. Innes wrote to the Bishop :—“ We have got a Qualified man here,” and on Nov. 27th, he added :—

“ I can as yet give you no satisfactory account of my Neighbour. So far as I know he is discreet enough of himself, tho' I cannot say so much for some of those he is concerned with. But you know the men ; they bred a schism in the Church before.”

The name of "the Qualified Man" was Wood. He only stayed in Perth a few years and was succeeded by the Rev. John Cameron.<sup>1</sup>

So much for the Charges in the Diocese of Dunkeld. It remains to go over the remnant in that of Dunblane :—

(16) *Doune*. The Rev. John Blair was still Priest at Doune on June 22nd, 1749, for, on that date, as we have seen, he arranged to come thence to meet Bishop Alexander, when the latter would be on his way to confirm the Rev. John Conacher's candidates on March 23rd, 1750. His aunts kept house for him, or at all events stayed with him occasionally. In the same letter, from which we derive those particulars, he told the Bishop about the preparations he was making for a pastoral round of his Congregation and for celebrating the Holy Communion. On March 30th, he alluded to the Bishop's visit to Mr. Conacher ; on May 7th, to the offence given to the Dunblane Presbytery by the Ardchean-chrocan Confirmation. Next year on Feb. 7th (1751) the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill wrote thus to the Bishop about him :—

"I saw Mr. Blair at Ardoch last week, who tells me that he received a 20 sh. note from B[ell] on Christmas Day. I fancy that he [*i.e.* Bell] does not know that his [*i.e.* Blair's] funds are more than his ever were at that place [*i.e.* Doune]. He [*i.e.* Blair] tells me he never was under £40 a year with Meal and Malt and what serves his house. I doubt if B[ell] be so well at this day. . . . B[ell] asks me when I am to be in Edinburgh."

On Nov. 27th, 1754, Mr. Blair while still Presbyter at Doune, baptized the Rev. William Erskine's child, Thomas, at Muthill.

But about 18 months after that he resigned, for on Aug. 24th, 1756, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

"I was informed by R[obert] F[orbes] of a new vacancy at Doune."

In this case there was no serious trouble about appointing a successor. After mentioning the vacancy, Mr. Lyon expressed regret at the news of Lord Arbuthnot's death, which he had just received, and then added, as if by an afterthought, "What becomes of Charlie Ross?" for of late that divine had been Chaplain to the deceased Nobleman. Now therefore that he was out of an appointment, and a vacancy had occurred at Doune, he became Mr. Blair's successor in that charge.

"Blessed be God (wrote the Presbyter at Stretton to the Bp.) that your Vacancys are so well supplied. I remember Charles Rose very well and beg my Service and best wishes to him. He was a strapping, comely, young Blade when I saw him last, which is a long time ago."

<sup>1</sup> S. John's Register, Perth.

That "long time ago" was probably when Mr. Lyon was Presbyter at Crail, and Bishop James Rose, with his small income and large family, of whom Charles was one, held the pastoral charge of Cupar Fife. On S. Matthew's Day (Sept. 21st), 1757, Mr. Rose is described in the *Dunkeld Register* as being a Presbyter and "at Doun." Thus began a long and notable pastorate.

(17) *Gartmore*. In the last chapter an account was given of the capture, trial, condemnation, and exile of the Rev. John Conacher. Some further particulars may be added here illustrating the after-effects which those sad occurrences had. Everywhere throughout the Diocese collections were made for the exile, and forwarded to him through the Bishop. At least £60 was thus sent about this time, and probably more came in from other quarters. In a letter of Sept. 22nd, 1755, the Rev. Robert Forbes speaks of Mr. Conacher's final departure as having just taken place; but, before that happened, *i.e.* on Aug. 8th, Mr. Conacher himself wrote to the Bishop as follows:—

"Some of my Hearers in the Braes of the Country Earnestly desire the Benefit of the Sacrament before I go away, which I could not deny, and upon that account can't be at Edinburgh till the last Tuesday of the month."

After his exile had actually begun, we have the following references to his orphaned charge. On Sept. 23rd, 1755, Bishop Falconar wrote:—

"It is very good of Mr. C——n to assist the honest people you mention. It must, however, be gone about with the utmost caution; and, as for Mr. Conacher's Charge in the lower part of the Country, no question but the crew (?) of them will be stole away by the Incumbents next them. God preserve his Church and grant us Patience."

And again on Nov. 4th, the Rev. Robert Forbes wrote:—

"Woe's me that there's no Successor to Mr. Conacher, about whom there are no Accounts as yet from his own Hands that I can see."

(18) *Muthill*. About six weeks after the battle of Culloden, *i.e.* on May 21st, 1746, the Rev. William Erskine, wrote to the Bishop:—

"I have been here since Easter and, I thank God, unmolested.<sup>1</sup> I continue to officiate as usual and had resolved to persevere in the exercise of my Function, even before the receipt of yours and am now not a little encouraged by the laudable example you have set me."

<sup>1</sup> But see p. 131.

On Sept. 8th, as we have already had occasion to mention, Messrs. Guthrie and Seaton informed the Bishop that they had had a visit from our Presbyter, who was on his way to Aberdeen. Was it on an ordinary visit, or because it was advisable for him to be invisible at Muthill for a time?

On Jan. 9th, 1750, he reported that to his surprise he had (like Mr. Blair) received £1 from Rev. W. Bell in Edinburgh. During the rest of the same year he was much troubled with reports that Lady Strathallan was about to go over to Rome. On July 17th, 1752, he wrote :

“ I had a meeting yesterday with my folks about our funds, and, having laid everything before them, showed them that Stipends, Offertory Collections, and every kind of Compliment received for the last five years did not amount to £15 a year and withal told them that more must be done or I would be under a Necessity of leaving them.”

On Jan. 17th, 1754, the Rev. R. Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

“ I shall be glad that B[rother] Erskine be very happy in his second Building.”

Were it not that the word deciphered “ Building ” in the MS. is very indistinct, this sentence would be final proof that a new Chapel was erected at this time and there can be no doubt that the reason why it was needed is to be found in the fact that the old Meeting House had been destroyed in 1746.

In the same letter Mr. Lyon said :—

“ Br[rother] Erskine . . . gives up all fair pretensions to become a Bishop, though indeed he of this Diocese at present has and holds, I think, a fourth.”

It is not clear whether the writer means a fourth of the number of souls, or only that his is one of the four charges in the Diocese, but it is curious that notices of four charges, neither more nor less, are available for insertion in this chapter.

The *Baptismal Register* shews that he had a son, Thomas, baptized by Mr. Blair on Nov. 21st, 1754. We saw in Chap. XII. that his *Baptismal Register* was left blank for some years after the great catastrophe, but in the eleven years 1749-1759 there are 180 entries, which gives an annual average of about 16.

(19) *Strathearn*. On Nov. 15th, 1753, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to the Bishop :—

“ I rejoice with Mr. Graeme and Lady Christina and hope you do not condemn me. But who, that knew the Strath as I did in 1712, 1713, 1714, etc., can help mourning over its present State? Dr. Ogilvie and I exchange sometimes tragical Ditties! But God's Will be done!”

Besides Muthill, which has been already dealt with, the only charges in Strathearn of which we have had mention since Bishop Alexander became responsible for the Diocese of Dunblane, have been Souterton, of which the Rev. John Graeme was Presbyter, and Dunning, which was under the charge of the Rev. Robert Lindsay in 1743. No information concerning Dunning is forthcoming for our present period. Muthill, therefore, and Souterton, to the Pastor of which Mr. Lyon alludes in the above extract, were now the only charges in Strathearn. But evidently Mr. Lyon remembered many more congregations in this district forty years ago, when he and Dr. Ogilvy were young!

As for the whole Diocese of Dunblane, if we still include Gartmore, despite its troubles, there were now only four Congregations left, *i.e.* Muthill, Doune, Gartmore, and Souterton.

(20) *Extra-Diocesan.* Besides the Ordinations for the Diocese of Dunkeld, which have been recorded in their places during this period, there were two others which were performed by Bishop Alexander for the Diocese of Edinburgh during the unfortunate vacancy of that See, *i.e.* :—

- (a) “ *Alloa, June 22nd, 1749.* Mr. Thomas Beal in Edinburgh, having passed the customary tryalls, was ordained Deacon in the Chapel there [*i.e.* Alloa], present, Mr. Ninian Niving in Torbrex, Mr. William Erskine in Muthill, Mr. William Harper in Bothkennar, and Mr. John Blair in Doun, Priests.”
- (b) “ *Alloa, S. Matthew's Day, Wednesday of Ember Week, 1757.* Mr. George Hewett, Deacon, was ordained Priest in the Chapel there [*i.e.* Alloa] at the desire of Bishop White, Primus, on a Call from the Congregation of Bothkennar, present Mr. Ninian Niving in Torbrex and Mr. Charles Rose in Doun, Priests.



## CHAPTER XV.

### 1746-1759.—*The Episcopal Succession.*

Having in the two last chapters given a view of the working of the penal laws and of parochial affairs in the Diocese from the battle of Culloden to the end of King George II.'s reign, let us retrace our steps once more and give some account of the changes in the Episcopal College during the same period.

It is rather a complicated subject, but not only are the actual appointments clear, as given by former historians, but also (as in the case of the penal laws and parochial affairs) a great amount of new and interesting information, illustrative of the inner working of things, has been derived from existing MSS.

(1) The first change came in the Diocese of Aberdeen. The Bishop, *i.e.* the Right Rev. William Dunbar, had lived from the year of the Restoration to that of Culloden, a period of startling Revolutions in the Scottish Church. He was at present therefore in the 85th year of his age.<sup>1</sup> His friend, Bishop Keith, in the "Historical Catalogue"<sup>2</sup> says of him :—

"He continued to retain that respect and affection which had been uniformly shewn to his public Character, and to promote by the prudent discharge of the delicate duties, attached in this country to Episcopal ministrations, the interests of the Church, which he had undertaken to serve."

His younger contemporary, the Rev. John Skinner<sup>3</sup> of Linshart also speaks of "his distinguished prudence and long experience."

But now, having resigned his See on July 4th, 1745, he was taken to his rest early in the year of the final overthrow of the Stewart hopes (1746).

Notwithstanding the severe measures which were at this time trying the Church, and in particular the new Act, which henceforth rendered it penal for five persons or more to meet together for the Worship of God, the steps necessary for the appointment of a successor were proceeded with after a surprisingly short interval. The Rev. Robert Lyon wrote as follows to Bishop Alexander on March 12th, 1747 :—

<sup>1</sup> *Grub.* 46, T.S. 331.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix, p. 533.

<sup>3</sup> II. p. 670.

"I was glad to hear from K[eith, the Primus], that he had eleven Hands for A[ndrew] G[erard]. *Deus secundet!*"

It was true. The Clergy of the Diocese, faithfully braving the risks involved in such action, met and unanimously elected the Presbyter mentioned by Mr. Lyon to the vacant See. He was "a person of deep piety and manly sense,"<sup>1</sup> and had begun his ministry as a Deacon before the death of Bishop Rose in 1720 in the family of Balgowan; and, having transferred his services to the house of Lord Nairn, "whither a goodly congregation of well-disposed country people continued to resort for the benefit of worship,"<sup>2</sup> acted "with such universal applause" that several Clergymen solicited Bishop Rose to promote him to the order of the Priesthood. Notwithstanding this strong recommendation, however, Mr. Gerard was not ordained Presbyter by Bishop Rose, but by Bishop Gadderar in 1721, and having come under the influence of this earliest leader of the Usagers, it was not long before he resigned the Chaplaincy at Nairne.<sup>3</sup> In 1728 we find him one of the Clergy of Aberdeen.

As if the deplorable state of Scottish Ecclesiastical affairs were not enough at this juncture for our Bishops to contend with, it seemed good to that (as we judge) right-hearted but wrong-headed Prelate, Bishop Smith, on hearing of Mr. Gerard's election to write to him from Burnhall on June 4th, 1747, as follows:—

"We understand that you are in a little time to be admitted to the Episcopate of which by the Character you bear we believe you very worthy. Now we find by the Minutes of the late Synod that a new Ordinal, never before made use of in your Church, is to be composed against the next Consecration that shall happen. But, since such a form has not the sanction of your Church and State, the Bishops here think it their Duty to protest against it. . . . If, therefore, your Consecration is not celebrated in the old way . . . we cannot look upon you as a Bishop of the Church of Scotland."

Now this was a very trying communication for our Bishops to receive. As we have seen, in accordance with a resolution made at their Synod of 1743, they had indeed looked for and secured a copy of *The Forme and Maner of Ordaining Ministers and Consecrating of Archbishops and Bishops used in the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1620*, which had been drawn up by direction of King James VI. but never brought into actual use,<sup>4</sup> and no

<sup>1</sup> C's Bp. F., p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> T.S. 331-2. Grub. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Lawson, p. 527.

<sup>4</sup> K. James promised that if Parliament would accept the 5 Articles of Perth, he would refrain from pressing his other Liturgical schemes.—*Sprot. Introduction*, p. xxxviii.-ix.

doubt they had conducted an enquiry (or had intended to do so, if the swiftly following disasters of the time had not prevented them) in order to satisfy themselves whether it might be possible and advisable to bring it into use. But surely the initiation of such an enquiry was a proceeding quite within the Bishops' rights; surely Bishop Smith might have asked whether the investigation had resulted in a resolution to adopt *The Forme*. Certainly no evidence survives to the effect that it had; on the contrary Bishop Raitt affirms that the English form of Ordination was the use in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Surely Bishop Smith might have trusted Prelates, so competent and so anxious to protect the Apostolical Succession, not to have made any unorthodox suggestion, and surely after he himself had so often urged them to remain faithful to the traditions of the "established" days of the Episcopal Church, he might have given his Scottish brethren credit in their conduct of this matter for seeing what could be done to meet the views of himself and his party.

As things were, they simply remarked that "the subject must have been suggested to him by the factious brethren in Edinburgh<sup>2</sup>" and proceeded with the matter on their own responsibility. The Primus indeed could not officiate at the Service, doubtless for reasons of health, but he sent a commission to Bishop White, who, with the assistance of Bishops Raitt, Falconar, and Alexander, consecrated Mr. Gerard at Cupar-Fife on July 17th, 1747.<sup>3</sup> It will be observed that there were at least five persons present, and that thus the assembly fell under the ban of the law of 1746. It will also be remembered that only about a year had elapsed since the Chapel in Cupar had been burned. Our Prelates therefore showed no little courage in carrying through the Consecration of Bishop Gerard amid the prevailing conditions.

(2) There was no other Consecration necessary during the next ten years. Bishop Keith, the Primus, however, was far from being physically robust. As early as Oct. 25th, 1748, the Rev. Robert Lyon wrote to Bishop Alexander:—

"K[ith] has been ill. I can flatter myself the Danger is over. You know that I wish and pray for his life and health."

And again on Aug. 23rd, 1751, we learn from the same correspondent that the general state of his health had been such as to cause Churchmen to be turning over various thoughts in their minds. His words to Bishop Alexander are as follows:—

"Honest K[ith !]. May it so please God that those who cannot discover his worth while they have him may be long before they find it out by the want of him! His

<sup>1</sup> Lawson, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Bp. G. in MS., June 15, 1747.

<sup>3</sup> T.T.S. 331.

last letter to me was much in his old, ordinary way, whence I declared on the side of his Females [*i.e.* that there was nothing seriously wrong with him], not without Fears that they and I may find ourselves mistaken. God's holy will be done ! 'Tis hard to form or give an Opinion about your going to Edinburgh [*i.e.* as Keith's successor]. It may be a long time before that District be in such a way to have a proper B[ishop], I mean one of its own, as it was before R[atray]'s death,<sup>1</sup> and, if K[eith] die, leaving or not leaving one of the Order on the spot, who can tell what part the Junto may act ? They may follow Peace, or raise dust, in either case. To ask them whether they wish to have one residing, or what one rather than another, is perhaps a Thing not to be done, but such Questions may be deliberated upon and determined by the Order and, if all or a Majority of them judge it fit that another be on the spot and also point out a Person, I think he ought to go forthwith [a hint to Bishop Alexander], if there be any way for his Subsistence. His People [*i.e.* the claims of his old Diocese] are no Objection. May God direct all to the best ! ”

By Sept. 25th, 1756, there was increased anxiety, and Mr. Lyon wrote :—

“ I hope Keith will wear on. To be weak is not far from his Ordinary, since ever I knew him and Robert Forbes does not represent him as quite failed in faculties.”

But the end was now near, and on Jan. 20th, 1757, he died at his residence in Leith at the age of 76.

“ During a trying and calamitous period (says Dr. Grub) he had presided over the Church with great prudence and ability. He was not popular amongst the [disaffected] Clergy of Edinburgh, but . . . by the members of the Church generally, as well as by those of other religious bodies, he was respected for his learning and worth.”<sup>2</sup>

He was succeeded as Primus by the Right Rev. Robert White, Bishop of Fife, but his diocese of Orkney and Caithness, for which inasmuch as he always resided in Edinburgh, he had only been able to provide from a distance, was left vacant in the meantime and administered by Bishop Falconar of Moray.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rattray succeeded Fairbairn as Bishop of Edinburgh by election, but died before accepting.

<sup>2</sup> Those who are interested in his career are referred to the LIFE prefixed to Bishop Russell's edition of the *Catalogue of Scottish Bishops* ; to the biography, with original documents reproduced, which fills up pages 187 to 284 of Vol. V. of Dr. Gordon's *Scotichronicon* ; and to pp. 72 to 83 of Craven's *History of the Episcopal Church in Moray, 1688-1913*.

<sup>3</sup> C.'s O. 83.

(3) The accession of the new Primus was followed by an incident upon which considerable fresh light is thrown by the MSS. The author of the *Memoirs*<sup>1</sup> supplies a starting point for our narrative. He says :—

“ Soon after Bishop Keith’s death proposals were made by the Presbyters in Edinburgh to the Bishops for accommodating matters and removing the differences, that had long subsisted between the Bishops and them.”

What the state of affairs was in the city at this time could be pretty minutely described from the letters addressed to Bishop Alexander, especially from those written by the Rev. W. Abernethy of Carrubers’ Close, and the Rev. R. Forbes of Leith. Without, however, attempting to set forth the situation minutely, suffice it to say that, besides the 17 recalcitrant Clergy, there were six or eight<sup>2</sup> who were loyal to the Bishops. And these two parties were very sharply divided, for, although the loyalists more than once requested that their names might be inscribed on the Diocesan list kept by the majority, the latter always declined to do what was asked. They boldly claimed that the Episcopal powers of administration in the Diocese were meantime held by them, as by commission, and therefore refused to allow any of the Bishops or of the Clergy loyal to the Bishops to have any official standing in Edinburgh.

And accordingly they took a pretty high-handed step at the present juncture. Although they claimed the powers of administration belonging to the Bishop, as, for instance, when they translated the Rev. W. Harper from Bothkennar to Edinburgh, yet they still recognised that Ordination was beyond their scope. Desiring therefore to have a Bishop of their own, they met, without admitting the six or eight loyal Clergy, and elected one of their own number, the Rev. Alexander Robertson, to the See. Serious efforts were made to have him consecrated, and indeed the Elect himself wrote to Bishop Alexander on Aug. 11th, 1759, proposing an interview.

No less an authority than Dr. Grub<sup>3</sup> shews plainly that he thinks the application ought to have been favourably received. Now it may seem to be the height of rashness to differ on such a point from so weighty an authority, but at least the full circumstances with which the Bishops were confronted deserve to be stated :—

(a) For one thing they had to remember that the half-dozen or so of loyal Clergy in Edinburgh had not been summoned to take part in the election. The meeting, therefore, which chose Mr. Robertson, was not a representative one.

<sup>1</sup> T.S. p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> See a letter of R. Forbes of May 15, 1759.

<sup>3</sup> pp. 12-47.

(b) For another, the meeting as a matter of fact had been called in conscious defiance of the authority of the whole Bench of Bishops. But, to put it more mildly, let us say that it was called without the Mandate of the Primus.

(c) Thirdly, supposing the election had been representative and authorized, yet there was a grave objection to Mr. Robertson, the person chosen. The Bishops were all indeed Jacobites, and even now hoped against hope that the native Royal House would be restored. But they had at least some small share of Scottish caution, and did not pray in public worship for the Prince by name. Mr. Robertson, however, as inheriting the more Erastian views of the old Anti-Usager party, did. This is proved by the following report of a conversation between the Rev. R. Forbes of Leith, and his colleague, the Rev. W. Law, who had voted in the election, and is taken from a letter addressed on May 8th, 1759, by the former to Bishop Alexander :—

“ *Mr. Forbes.* But Pray, Mr. Law, what was the onerous cause of pitching upon Mr. R[obertson] preferably to all others? Was it because he had the merit of praying *nominatim* for——as often as he had toes and fingers?

*Mr. Law.* Others did so!

*Mr. Forbes.* Yes! J. Harper, Senior, did so as often at least.”

If, therefore, the Bishops had consecrated Mr. Robertson, this would have got the Church into serious trouble. As Mr. Forbes said in conclusion to his Colleague :—

“ Mr. Law, if you and others had studied it, you could not have taken a more effectual Method to cut your own girths, as to what you have in view, than that ye have taken; for that will vindicate the Bishops before God and Man in an absolute refusal.”

(d) Again, Mr. Forbes in the same letter brings forward another consideration which had the utmost weight with the Bishops. He says that it was :—

“ The Intention of the enrolled Brethren [*i.e.* the electing Presbyters] that their Bishop should directly act as Vice-Metropolitan.”

Now, in order to yield this point to the recalcitrants, it would have been necessary for the Bishops to tear up the *Concordate* of 1731 as “ a mere scrap of paper.” For it had been agreed in that treaty, as a means for effecting the reconciliation of the *Diocesan* and *College* parties who were on the verge of rending the Church asunder by a schism, that the Vice-Metropolitan claims of the Bishop of Edinburgh should be once and for all dropped, and a Primus elected irrespective of his diocese, and without any

Archi-episcopal rights. This, the Bishops felt, was asking too much of them.

(e) Lastly, there was, as will soon appear from a letter written by Bishop Alexander, another crucial difficulty in the way of appointing a Bishop of Edinburgh at all, so long as the Bishops remained Jacobites, and it is to be remembered that the recalcitrant Presbyters were at this time almost more Jacobitical than the Bishops. The difficulty was this. Although it had been agreed, under the leadership of the late Bishop Rattray, that all the other Sees should be filled up independently of the exiled Prince, yet those of Edinburgh and Glasgow were to be provided by nomination from him. Moreover the *de facto* Government were perfectly aware of this arrangement. If, therefore, a Bishop, nominated by the Prince and consecrated by the Bishops, were to be set up in the See of Edinburgh—well, probably every Bishop's seat in Scotland would be forcibly vacated before many hours were over! And on the other hand, if the Bishops consecrated a Bishop for Edinburgh without nomination from the Prince, that would have meant the breaking of the very last shred of authority which the exiled Monarch claimed. Jacobitism would have been at an end, and yet, as the Government would not have believed that the Prince had not had a say in the matter, the Bishops would have been punished all the same for Jacobitism.

Altogether, although Dr. Grub is right in deploring the continuation of the vacancy in the See of Edinburgh, the difficulties in the way of the Bishops accepting Mr. Robertson seem to be fairly insuperable. Efforts were indeed made to have him consecrated by less than the canonical number of Bishops, and both the Primus (White), whose relations with his colleagues were a little strained, and Bishop Falconar, who was inclined to do anything for peace, were approached, but neither of them would move.

(4) The affair of Mr. Robertson therefore came to an end. Nevertheless, as appears from Bishop Alexander's letter<sup>1</sup> of March 17th, 1759, to the Primus, it is plain that the latter was not satisfied with a blank *non possumus* to the disaffected Clergy. He was turning over in his mind the question of how an accommodation might be reached with them, and at last he hit upon the following scheme. True, the Consecration of Mr. Robertson was to be refused. But still was there no half-way house? Since the Presbyters on their side had all along laid such stress upon every ecclesiastical step receiving the sanction of the (exiled) King; and the Bishops on theirs had never contested his claims to have a say in the appointment to the See of Edinburgh, would not the following be an acceptable compromise? He asked that the Presbyters should accept one of the already consecrated Bishops,

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* 295.

and that the latter should, with the consent of the Episcopal College, accept a nomination from the Prince to the vacant See. To bring matters to a point, he suggested that Bishop Raitt should be the man. He was indeed the Prelate with whom he himself was on the most harmonious terms. That the Primus had formed such a scheme is clear from a phrase occurring in Bishop Alexander's letter, in which, while discussing "things in Edinburgh," he distinctly names Bishop White's "project for procuring a Nomination for R."

Such was the proposal. Bishop Alexander, however, actively supported by Bishop Gerard, was hotly opposed to it; and certainly the grounds on which Mr. Robertson was refused are sufficient to justify his objections. Indeed it was at this juncture that he wrote the following letter, which has all along since 1744, provided us with the key to the Bishops' conduct with regard to the See of Edinburgh:—

"I spoke indeed with all due respect of Raitt . . . but gave it as my opinion that things at Edinburgh should be allowed to rest in the way they had been in for many years, and no motion made to raise new dust. And particularly as to the Application [*i.e.* on behalf of Raitt to the Prince] I declared I would not concur in it for reasons which might have been obvious to you, as they were to me, but I chose not to insist upon. You know, my dear Sir, how much such practices were exclaimed against in former times, and by none more than yourself, for the perils and confusions they involved us in; and surely the reasons against them are not less, but much more cogent now [*i.e.* after Culloden] than they were then [*i.e.* before the fatal Rising]. Our late Calamities were chiefly owing to the notion our enemies had conceived of us, that we were all Nominees [*i.e.* of the Prince] and kept up an illicit Correspondence. And any respite we have since enjoyed proceeds from their having been undeceived in this respect and assured that none of our Number are such. You are not to think that the Inhibition with regard to Edinburgh [*i.e.* issued by the Prince against filling up that See without a Nomination from him] is any secret to them; and, if it is taken off and that See filled, the consequence is clear; and they will easily *conclude* by what means, though there were no other way of coming at the truth, as there are but too many. I cannot therefore imagine what would be your Motive to precipitate our destruction by so temerarious an action, especially as it cannot answer your end [*i.e.* of conciliating the Edinburgh Clergy, who do not want a Prelate of Bishop Raitt's Usager views]; nor serve the person [*i.e.* Raitt] you intend it should, who, I daresay, is wiser than to thank you for it."

This scheme of the Primus therefore fell through, and evidently it was largely due to our Bishop that both it and that in connection with Mr. Robertson did so. On Aug. 25th, 1759, the Rev. R. Lyon wrote to him :—

“ O for a grain of your Stability ! God be thanked for your Firmness in not meeting with Alexander Robertson ! ”

(5) There was also a controversy with regard to another Episcopal Consecration which was going on at the same time as that in connection with Edinburgh, and in which our Bishop took a prominent part.

It appears that the Primus had been moved to suggest the filling up of the See of Edinburgh, not only for the reasons which have already been detailed, but also because he was becoming nervous lest a failure of the Episcopal Succession should take place. He therefore proposed further Consecrations at the present juncture. In reply to the general suggestion Bishop Alexander wrote as follows to him on March 17th, 1759 :—<sup>1</sup>

“ As to Promotions, I have said from the beginning that I saw no immediate necessity of proceeding to any, as, thanks to God, we are not so few as should make us dread any imminent Danger of the Succession failing ; and I hope that we may rely upon his goodness that three of us will not drop off at once. . . . I am for laying aside all thought of this at present, and referring the decision entirely to Providence by the Election of the Clergy of the District that first becomes vacant, which is the only warrantable way.”

The Primus, however, was not to be put off so, and made the definite proposal that a Coadjutor should be consecrated to come to his own assistance and that the Rev. Henry Edgar, Presbyter at Arbroath,<sup>2</sup> and brother of the Prince's Private Secretary at Rome, should be the person. Considering what the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill called “ the good man's [*i.e.* Bishop White's] Age and Infirmities ”<sup>3</sup> and the fitness of the proposed nominee, Bishop Alexander wrote to Bishop Falconar :—

“ I am entirely satisfied that W[hite] should have a Coadjutor—he needs it much—and that H[enry] E[dgar] should be the person. I esteem him highly and shall, God willing, assist at his Consecration, when called in terms of the Protest.”

In terms of the Protest ! That meant that, although there was agreement amongst the Bishops concerning the thing to be

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* 296.

<sup>2</sup> *Intrusion* 63. He had been a member of the Synod which condemned David Fyffe in 1743.

<sup>3</sup> *Scotich.* 302.

done, there were important differences of opinion as to the mode of procedure. In fact on two grounds Bishop Alexander held that the Primus was going about the matter in a wrong way :—

*First*, Bishop White proposed that Mr. Edgar should be elected by some Diocese, which at present had no Diocesan of its own. He had, it appears, already tried the vacant Diocese of Ross and Caithness, and had been distinctly nettled by the failure of the Clergy there to oblige him, and he now suggested Glasgow. In that 'District' there were two Clergy, *i.e.* the Rev. David Lyon, who had formerly been Presbyter at S. Andrews, and under whose charge the congregation at Glasgow has so increased that in 1754 they had to remove to a large hall in Stockwell Street ;<sup>1</sup> and the Rev. — Lothian, who was living in Dumfries, but was of unsatisfactory character. On March 7th, 1759, Bishop Falconar wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

" [Bp. White] insists that I should concur in the Consecration of Mr. Edgar for the District of Glasgow."

And on April 24th, the Rev. R. Forbes says in his own lively manner to the same correspondent :—

" In going and coming, we had D[avid] L[yon] with us at Dinner, who immediately imparted to me some things that almost made me tremble, not for myself but for others. Bairn [Bp. White's Son ?] by the command of Albus [*i.e.* Bp. White] had written to D[avid] L[yon] speedily to make choice of H[enry] E[dgar] for his Superiour and to give the matter the better face, desired D[avid] L[yon] to write to Mr. L[othian] at Dumfries for his Concurrence and Vote ; for that such a Measure was absolutely [necessary] for the good of the Church and, particularly, would be agreeable to a certain Family abroad " [*i.e.* the exiled Prince].

But Bishop Alexander was strongly opposed to the suggestion for the following weighty reasons :—

" There are two actual Presbyters in the District pointed at, and, though one of them be not now officiating nor famed for his worth and regularity, yet he is under no censure ; nay, he was actually applied to in the present case ; and, had he given his vote, as desired, no doubt it would have been sustained. But, as I am well informed, he not only refused, but has used threatenings, which may be of dangerous consequence to us all. So that here is Mr. Lothian's *minus* from Mr. Lyon's *plus* and the remnant is 0. 5thly Even Mr. Lyon's Petition was not a regular and voluntary Deed ; there was no Mandate from the Bishops. . . . It is absurd to say that any Majority [*i.e.* of the Bishops] can make *one* to be a *number* and so capable of electing in the sense of our Canons."

<sup>1</sup> C.'s Bp. F. 33.

Well, therefore, did the Rev. *Robert Lyon* on July 15th, 1760, ask :—

“ Why struggle thus for Glasgow, where there is only one Presbyter ? ”

Evidently the Primus did not feel that he was on firm ground in Glasgow, so he looked about for another vacant See. Accordingly it struck him that, after all, Bishop Alexander was only administrator and not actual Diocesan of Dunblane, and, availing himself of the technical point, thought he would make an attempt in that Diocese. On Aug. 14th, 1759, therefore, he wrote to the Rev. W. Erskine of Muthill :—

“ Now you have a fair opportunity of having this [*i.e.* vacancy] supplied by making Mr. Edgar your choice, which if you do, you need not apply for a Mandate, but without delay send me up an Address or Petition signifying that you are satisfied with his Consecration taking place and that in the event of it you will receive him as your proper and fixed Bishop. Dear Sir, I entreat that, laying aside all other attachments, you would bestir yourself to induce your two Brethren [*i.e.* Mr. Rose at Doune and Mr. Graeme at Souterton] to unite in gratifying us in what we are so desirous of and taking this Occasion to do service to this distressed Church.”

We may give the frail but eager old man credit for believing that his project was indeed “ a service to this distressed Church.” Can it be possible that he was working for such a balance of votes in the Episcopal College, as would satisfy the Edinburgh recal-citrants by the Bishops entering into closer correspondence with the exiled Prince ? But, whether that was so or not, we see that his plan for a Diocesan for Dunblane was as effectually blocked as that for a Bishop of Glasgow had been, for on Aug. 24th, 1759, the Rev. W. Erskine wrote to Bishop Falconar :—

“ What occasion have we for a Bishop so long as Mr. Alexander is so good as to perform Episcopal acts among us, which he can do without any great addition to his expense of travelling as he has Mr. Graeme’s Bounds and mine to ride through before he reach his own District ? If there was any occasion for our having a Bishop, he is the Person we would make choice of, as upon all accounts the fittest ; and our people from their acquaintance with him having so much Regard for him that the bare Proposal of another would give them offence.”<sup>1</sup>

The situation so far, therefore, was this. The Primus could not obtain from any of the vacant Dioceses, least of all from Glasgow, to which Bishops Alexander and Gerard definitely objected,

<sup>1</sup> *Scotch.* 302.

the election of which he was in search. And so on Nov. 9th, 1759, Bishop Alexander informed Bishop Falconar, who was generally sympathetic, that he had written to the Primus on Oct. 8th, telling him that he had asked Bishop Gerard for his opinion, and that, as the result, they two were ready to concur in Mr. Edgar's Consecration provided that all attempt at the quasi-election to Glasgow were dropped and that simply *the Primus's nomination to the Coadjutorship* were taken as the Bishops' authority for proceeding.

But *secondly*, there was another point of procedure on which our two Prelates insisted quite as strongly, as a *sine qua non* of their co-operation. It was that a Mandate should be issued for an Episcopal election in Ross and Caithness. So long ago as fourteen months previously, *i.e.* Sept. 7th, 1758, the Clergy of that vacant Diocese had petitioned for a Mandate to elect a Bishop, and the two Bishops were strongly in favour of granting their petition. Bishop Alexander said :—<sup>1</sup>

"There we see a sett of regular Clergymen, who have a considerable *portio gregis*, a large extent of Country, under their Charge, who have long been destitute and neglected by us, addressing us in a canonical way—a way laid down to them by ourselves—to have a Bishop set over them, and many excellent ends such a Settlement would serve. . . . We ought to have met them more than half way, and done everything to encourage them."

If a Mandate were issued, a speedy and satisfactory election (he thought) was certain. He wrote to Bishop Falconar :—

"Meantime, if this pleases, I shall write to B[p] G[erard] to advise them [*i.e.* the Presbyters of Ross and Caithness] either immediately to elect one of themselves, or refer the Election to us [*i.e.* the Bishops]. And I am assured by them that know them, that both Taylor [of Thurso] and Stewart [of Tain] are sufficient men and either of them, being on the spot, can do more service than they who live at a remote distance."<sup>2</sup>

That being the state of affairs in the north, our two Prelates maintained that it would be manifestly unjust (while every device, even such as an unreal election in Glasgow and a needless one in Dunblane was being resorted to in order to procure the consecration of the Rev. Henry Edgar) to persist in the refusal of a Mandate for the *bona fide* case of Ross and Caithness.

But the Primus acted with regard to this second demand of Bishops Alexander and Gerard in much the same way as he behaved towards the first. He neither conceded it nor refused

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* 304, and C.'s Bp. F. 17.

it frankly. He tried, however, to get round it. Apparently with the design that, if his own nominee, Mr. Edgar, was not to be a Diocesan Bishop with a vote in the College, there at least should not be added another out of harmony with himself by a free election in Ross and Caithness, he wrote to the Presbyters there offering them a Mandate clogged with the condition that they should elect Bishop Falconar,<sup>1</sup> who was already administering the Diocese as best he could from Edinburgh, but such a Mandate they would not accept.

At last, while still no very definite agreement had been come to about the two conditions on which Bishops Alexander and Gerard insisted, and towards which Bishop Falconar inclined, the Primus summoned his Right Rev. Brethren for the Consecration of Mr. Edgar as his Coadjutor at Cupar, and for this Bishop Alexander set off on Oct. 31st, having given notice that he adhered to his conditions.

When he arrived, he found the rest of the Bishops "chapterly convened." As for his first condition, he understood that the Primus would not press "election" by the single Presbyter in Glasgow as a preliminary to Mr. Edgar's Consecration. It would go forward on the footing of his own nomination of him as Coadjutor. But, as for the second condition, that previous to the Consecration, a Mandate should be issued for Ross and Caithness, there was some discussion:—

"Then the [Primus's] scruples came out. And what were these? Why, truly, that the Northerners had taken upon themselves without our Authority to unite the Districts of Ross and Caithness."<sup>2</sup>

Neither Bishop Alexander, however, nor Bishop Gerard attached any real weight to this objection:—

"I told them (said the former) that, if that was any crime, I was sure it was a sin of ignorance in them, who, I was persuaded, intended us no affront."<sup>2</sup>

Then Bishop Falconar, who had been balancing, exclaimed at the last moment:—

"Indeed I think that by our Rules we cannot be accountable for refusing a Mandate after so long a Delay."

Whereupon Bishops White and Raitt finding that now they had the other three Bishops all against them, proposed that a compromise should be found. The Primus:—

"At last stumbled upon one which ended all, and it was this— That he should immediately write to the Rossians, telling them their error and desiring them to acknowledge it; that, in consideration of their Address, the Bishops had now

<sup>1</sup> C.'s Bp. F. 17 and T.S. 373.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* 307.

united the two Districts and signed a Mandate to them to elect a Bishop to themselves, which was lodged in his hand immediately to be transmitted to them upon the receipt of their letter of acknowledgement."<sup>1</sup>

Now, therefore, that both of their scruples had been satisfied, the three Bishops assisted the Primus and Bishop Raitt in the Consecration of the Rev. Henry Edgar on S. Luke's day, October 18th, 1759. Bishop Alexander expressed himself on the subject as follows :—

" Thus matters were compromised and I was glad to come in, as I could not make a better of it. The rest of the evening, the Primus on one side of the fire sat in an elbow chair telling old stories and Falconar on the other side echoed back his applause ; while Raitt and I, in the same opposition, sate entirely mute ; for, indeed, I was unwell, as the long ride had brought on my gravel. After supper I left them and went to my Quarters and next day the Papers were extended and signed after the Consecration."

So the affair ended, but the conversations after the Consecration left Bishop Alexander somewhat anxious. The possibility of having the newly consecrated Coadjutor "elected" by the Rev. D. Lyon to the Diocese of Glasgow was revived, and only defeated by Bishop Falconar again standing firmly by Bishops Alexander and Gerard and, there having been talk that the Rev. Robert Forbes of Leith was a likely choice on the part of the Rossians, Bishop Alexander had an uncomfortable suspicion that the Primus intended to oppose that Presbyter and might irregularly clog the Mandate, which he had been empowered to issue, with the stipulation that the Electors must choose one of the already consecrated Bishops.

" But (he says) I took no notice. We parted decently and I came back to Falkland that night and next day arrived here [*i.e.* Alloa] in health. *D[eo] G[ratias]* !

The chapter will be appropriately ended with a brief account of the newly consecrated Bishop's previous history.

He had been born at Keithick near Brechin in 1698 of the family of Wadderlie, and so was of the mature age of 61 at the time of his elevation. His Baptism took place on April 2nd of the year of his birth.<sup>2</sup> One of his godfathers was Henry Maule of Kellie. The Edgars were avowed supporters of the House of Stuart, and deeply implicated in both the attempts made to restore it to the

<sup>1</sup> *Scotich.* 307.

<sup>2</sup> *April* 2, 1698. David Edgar of Keithick, husband to Elizabeth Guthrie, had a son Baptized named Hendrie. Witnesses, Hendrie Maull of Kellie, Hendrie Graham of Menorgan, Hendrie Guthrie.—*Jervise's Land of the Lindsays*, p. 271.

throne. John and James, brothers of Henry, were both out in the "Fifteen." John was taken prisoner and died in Stirling Castle. James escaped to Italy, where he became Secretary to the Chevalier St. George, and afterwards to Prince Charles Edward. Their nephew, John Edgar, was out in the "Forty-Five."<sup>1</sup> In 1729,<sup>2</sup> in consequence of a letter from John Ochterlonie, Bishop of Fife, he was presented by Mr. Maule to the charge of the Congregation of Arbroath.<sup>1</sup> Considering his antecedents :—

"It<sup>1</sup> is not surprising that the Magistrates thought it necessary to enquire what he was doing to support lawful authority. The enquiry shewed that he was a very doubtful subject of H.M. King George. . . . Possibly this was the occasion on which, knowing that the soldiers were on his track, he took refuge in the treadle hole of a handloom in a weaving shop. He was arrested but, several of the Magistrates having strong Jacobite leanings, he was dismissed. After the 1745 Mr. Edgar's "house" usually had pacing in front of it at the hour of Divine Service, a guardian angel in the shape of a red-coated sentry. Sometimes, when all the rooms had their quota, those who could not obtain admission, remained outside at the lower windows. . . . On one occasion a baptism was conducted through a barred window, Mr. Edgar being inside, and the child, parents, and sponsors outside."

So far Mr. Crowder in his *Episcopacy in Arbroath*.<sup>3</sup> It has been already related in Chap. XII. how Mr. Edgar was again arrested in 1750 and taken for trial to Forfar, where his case caused much alarm, but ended in his acquittal, owing to the reluctance of the witnesses to give evidence against him.

<sup>1</sup> Crowder 23-4, and *Scotich*, 292-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich*. 294.

<sup>3</sup> p. 25.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### 1760-1765.—*Accession of George III.—State of the Diocese.*

King George II. died on Oct. 25th, 1760, and was succeeded by King George III.<sup>1</sup> This double event involved a great deal for the distressed Church, for, whereas the deceased Monarch's reign had been marked by the active enforcement of the penal laws, the new Sovereign soon showed himself disinclined to follow so extreme a course. In his own secret heart he could not bring himself to hate "a Communion whose only crimes were an attachment to Episcopacy and an exaggerated opinion of the claims of hereditary right."<sup>2</sup> for he himself was a devout Churchman and a strong believer in the rights of royal lineage. The penal laws still remained, indeed, upon the statute book, ready at hand, if necessary, to be put into operation, but the Magistrate was no longer encouraged as heretofore to be always taking the volume down from the shelf and directing his actions according to its requirements. Moreover on the Church's side a distinct, although at first unavowed, change was coming over the Jacobitism of her members. Instead of being a rational expectation of the restoration of the Stewarts and a determination to help on their cause, as it had been before Culloden, it was now coming to be only a loyal sentiment and an abstract wish that what was outside, were within, the range of practical politics! The animus, therefore, between Church and State, though still hostile, was distinctly softened.

At this point, therefore, it will be convenient to pause and enquire what the effect of the previous fifteen years of suffering had been.

One certain result was the great diminution of the numbers, both of the Clergy and Laity. I have not, indeed, found a particular statement of the exact size of the decrease, as it stood at the present date, with regard to the whole Church, but it is true that immediately before the fatal Rising the number of our Clergy was about 125. That, as we have seen, was the statement made by Bishop Keith to Bishop Smith in 1744.<sup>3</sup>

Skinner of Linshart, however, who lived through the period goes on to say:—<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grub. 48, 86.

<sup>2</sup> Grub. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Walker, however, in the appendix to his Sermon on the death of Bishop Strachan (p. 19) says:—"Upwards of 200," and in the Appendix to his Charge of 1832 he puts the figures at 300.

<sup>4</sup> Hist. II. 671.

“Many of the older Clergy were called off by death and such young men as had been preparing themselves for the service of the Church, being frightened at the discouraging prospects before them, or wrought upon by the timorous caution of their friends, turned their thoughts another way, and either went abroad, or retired to some secular business at home.

The Gentry, too, of our Communion . . . finding their legal privileges struck at by the disqualifying Act of 1746, stood aloof in many places from our Worship and, not inclining, or not having sufficient conviction of its spiritual authority, to join the establishment, appeared in no place of Worship whatever.”

This being the general trend of affairs, we are not surprised to find it exemplified within Bishop Alexander's jurisdiction. In *Dunblane* the number of Clergy immediately before the Rising was seven, but (as we saw, when the Primus wanted the Presbyters of this District to elect Henry Edgar for their Bishop) it was now reduced to three, *i.e.* the Rev. William Erskine of Muthill, the Rev. John Graeme of Souterton, and the Rev. Charles Rose of Doune.

And in *Dunkeld* the number of Clergy at the earlier date was sixteen. There is indeed no entry in the *Register* of this Diocese, subsequent to the Rising and within Bishop Alexander's Episcopate, professing to give a complete list of his Presbyters, but an examination of the names of those present at a succession of meetings during this period reveals at the most only seven, *i.e.* James Lyall at Kirriemuir; James Hill at Wester Gourdie; George Skene at Forfar; Francis Crombie at Alyth; David Guthrie at Carsebank; James Taylor in Stormont; and, it seems, James Brown at Touch, near Stirling, whom the Bishop regarded as partly assistant to himself at Alloa.

Altogether, therefore, our Bishop in 1760 presided over 10 Clergy in his two Dioceses, as compared with 22 in 1744. That is to say, the penal laws of 1746 and 1748 had reduced his clerical forces by more than a half.

Nevertheless, despite the discouragement afforded by their experiences and prospects, the remaining handful of Bishops and Clergy proceeded with an indomitable faith to “gather up the fragments that remained.” The Church was in ruins, but the greater liberality of the new King, who was less in sympathy with 1689 than were his German predecessors, formed, as it were, a rift in the stormy clouds.

Of the improved state of affairs at the opening of the reign, Thomas Stephen<sup>1</sup> gives the following general account:—

<sup>1</sup> p. 372.

“ More than the formidable number *four* [now] ventured to meet in their own private dwellings. This being overlooked, or connived at, they began to think of re-erecting their Churches, that had been ruthlessly burnt down by the Duke of Cumberland and to reopen those that had been shut up by the legal authorities. . . . There were some young men, too, beginning to appear now for the ministerial office.”

And what was taking place generally occurred likewise within Bishop Alexander's jurisdiction. There was a revival in Diocesan life, and in the remaining congregations the wreckage was gathered together.

First, then, for the *Diocese* :—

With regard to *Dunblane*, indeed there was no resumption of the synodical meetings, which had come to an end with the attempts at electing a successor to Bishop White in 1744. This is not to be wondered at, when we remember the facts already recorded, *i.e.* that there were now only three Presbyters in the Diocese, and that Bishop Alexander was only administrator and not Diocesan of the District.

But in *Dunkeld* the situation was different. As we have just seen, there were seven Clergy remaining here, and Bishop Alexander was their own Diocesan. The synodical meetings, the last of which had been held nineteen years previously, *i.e.* on April 30th, 1745, were therefore resumed on Nov. 27th, 1764. We can imagine with what chastened gladness the worthy Presbyters would once more receive their Bishop's summons, after supposing for so long a time that they would never again take part in such a re-union ! They met at Forfar and the Minute of this humble, but memorable Synod, runs as follows :—

“ In consequence of an order from the R. Rev. Mr. John Alexander, Bishop of Dunkeld, a Quorum of his Presbyters met here this day, when Mr. James Hill at Gourdie [Blairgowrie] laid before his brethren the Bishop's letter constituting the said Mr. Hill his Vicar or Dean in the management of the affairs of the District, which Nomination the Presbyters present acquiescing in, the Rev. Mr. Francis Crombie at Fullarton [Meigle] was continued Clerk as formerly.”

This minute itself is redolent of the atmosphere of its own date. It records, indeed, that “ a Quorum of the Presbyters met here this day ” but the full list of names is not given. They were too timid and too cautious to do that. They admit that Mr. Hill, and perhaps Mr. Crombie, were present, and also some others, but they are not going to put down in writing whether there were more than four there. With the penal laws still unrepealed it was not for them to provide a record, which might

be used later on as dangerous evidence against themselves! It would have been most interesting for us in the 20th century to have had a definite statement of the full Diocesan strength at this juncture, but Bishop Alexander's Clergy would have run a serious risk in providing us with it!

To come, however, to the business transacted by the meeting. The first item, as recorded above, was the appointment of the Rev. James Hill of Blairgowrie, or Wester-Gourdie, to the Dean-ship. This was necessary on account of the death of David Guthrie who had been appointed to the office in 1754. The last known mention of him occurs in a letter of the Rev. R. Lyon to Bishop Alexander, in connection with a meeting of the Bishops, and dated June 14th, 1762. He must have been taken to his rest therefore sometime between this last date and the meeting of the present Synod.

Naturally the brethren, knowing that for long Church life in the Diocese, although more or less driven underground and sadly diminished in volume, had yet been flowing in a slender but unbroken stream, took into consideration the advisability of rescuing some record of it from oblivion. Accordingly:—

"They next had under consideration the state of their *Presbytery Register*,<sup>1</sup> wherein the Confusions of the Country and Distress of the Church had occasioned an interruption for several [*i.e.* nineteen] years. It was therefore recommended to all the Brethren to use their diligence in searching for proper documents of every material Transaction relative to the Church during these years, and to transmit the same to their Clerk, to be by him inserted in their proper order in the *Register* and in the meantime this Minute lie in his hands till such time as it can be inserted in its proper place."

Alas! with one or two exceptions immediately to be noticed, this admirable resolution bore no fruit! Possibly the brethren had ceased to realise their corporate Diocesan life, or, grown timid and procrastinating through stress of persecution, failed to do anything. Very likely too, since Mr. Crombie, the Synod Clerk, had fallen "into the sere and yellow leaf" of his days, he was dilatory about copying whatever documents were communicated to him into the *Register*. Let the reason, however, be what it may, the fact is that only two records for the vacant years were inserted.

One, and that an important one, came from the Bishop. He sent in a list of nine Ordinations which he had preformed since the fatal day of Culloden. Of this list in the Bishop's handwriting a copy was made and remained in Mr. Crombie, the Synod Clerk's

<sup>1</sup> Called in these pages *The Dunkeld Register*.

keeping. He, however, being in a frail state, put off entering it in the *Register*, but ultimately it was copied into that volume by his successor. It was from this that we derived the account of all the Ordinations previous to 1760, which have been already given. We will now add those which took place within the first five years of the "Sixties." They were as follows:—

(1) "*Alloa, April 16th, 1760.* Mr. James Brown in Touch upon an ample testimony from the Dean [*i.e.* Guthrie] and Clergy appointed to take his Trials, was ordained Deacon in the Chapel there [*i.e.* in Alloa], present Mr. Ninian Niving in Torbrex, Mr. William Erskine in Muthill, Dr. Wm. Abernethie in Edinburgh, Mr. James Hill at Wester Gourdie, Mr. Charles Rose in Doune, and Mr. George Skene in Forfar, Priests.

This was our friend from Forfar,<sup>1</sup> who had been so sternly kept in order in the School there; confirmed by Bishop Raitt in Dundee and kept out of the living of Glenesk, which that Prelate had offered him, by the factor of the confiscated estates. He was now successful in having been appointed to Touch near Stirling. In what capacity he was to minister there is not so clear. Upon the whole it looks as if he were to be tutor to the Smith family, and that, not being far from Alloa, he was to render clerical help to the Bishop himself when allowed. That such was the arrangement is inferred from two allusions in letters written by the Bishop. In the first, dated May 12th, 1760, he said:—

"Brown officiated for me yesterday but he does not officiate in the Family and I am afraid Restrictions may be laid on him and I deprived of his Services when I go North."<sup>2</sup>

In the second, dated Aug. 26th, 1761, he made allusion to the young Deacon as having conveyed Bishop Gordon's compliments to Mr. Smith.

The other Ordination is thus entered in the Register:—

(2) "*Alloa, S. John Baptist's Day [June 24th] 1761.* Mr. Wil. Smith in Craighall, upon an ample testimony of his sufficiency from the Clergie appointed to try him, was ordained Deacon in the Chapel there [*i.e.* at Alloa], Mr. James Hill in Wester Gourdie, Mr. George Skene in Forfar and Mr. Charles Rose in Doune, Priests, and Mr. James Brown, Deacon, being present."

Thus there were at least six persons present. Our Churchmen were growing bold! It is obvious why Mr. Hill was amongst them, for Craighall, from whence the candidate came, was, as we know, embraced in his charge, and Mr. Skene, too, was familiar with that neighbourhood. On this occasion the Smiths had been able to oblige the Bishop by setting Mr. Brown free to attend.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XIV.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 42.

As for the candidate, Mr. William Smith, himself; he was a member of the Burnhall family, near Durham, who were closely connected with the Smiths of Touch. He was thus a near relative of the Bishop Smith, who had given our Scottish Bishops such endless trouble. But the mere fact that he was ordained by Bishop Alexander proves that he himself did not share that Prelate's views. Moreover he was the nephew of Mrs. Gordon, the wife of the English Nonjuring Bishop of that name. And on what title was he ordained? It will be noticed above that his examiners are described vaguely. It is not said, as in the case of Mr. Brown, that they were "The Dean and Clergy" (*i.e.* those of Dunkeld) but only "the Clergy appointed to try him." Now why is this? It is because Mr. Smith was ordained as assistant to his Uncle, Bishop Gordon in London.<sup>1</sup> As Mr. Smith does not re-appear in our narrative, we will add here that there was a rumour in 1771 to the effect that he was to succeed the Rev. Thomas Wagstaffe as "Chaplain" to Prince Charles Edward.

Such was the Bishop's contribution towards filling up the melancholy blank in the *Dunkeld Register* (1745-1764). The only other particulars supplied were those which we have already used in connection with the death of Dean Seton in 1754.

Having thus dealt with the corporate life of the brethren as displayed in their revived Synod, let us now once more go the round of the Diocese, and, taking such charges as survive, in their alphabetical order, collect whatever notices concerning each have come down to us.

(1) *Alloa*. And let us begin with the Bishop's own congregation. The two *Ordinations*, of which an account has just been given, might appropriately have been noted under this head, inasmuch as they took place in the Chapel in Alloa, but they have been included in the report of the Synod, as having been reported to that body.

We have an interesting and amusing glimpse into the Bishop's *domestic affairs* at this period. Being unmarried he was, of course, dependent for his comfort upon the care of a housekeeper, and in the Spring of 1762 he had evidently parted with one who had served him in that capacity, for he was on the outlook for another. Accordingly, like a wise man, he had written to the north and asked Mrs. Gerard to help him in the matter.

On April 10th, he heard from Arthur Petrie the result of his application, for the latter wrote:—

"Know then . . . that Mrs. Gerard has engaged one, Mary Thane, an acquaintance of Margaret Bogie's, for a Servant to you; a person, whom she could recommend for most

<sup>1</sup> Overton 324.

of the Qualifications you required, but particularly for entire Honesty and Carefulness."

But the young man, having himself had to get along as best he could on a salary of £6 a year at Walkinshaw, had now the delicate task laid upon him of breaking the news gently to his Right Reverend Uncle that Mary Thane, although desirable, was an expensive luxury. Mrs. Gerard, he said, had agreed that she should have no less than 50 shillings a year! Nor was that the worst:—

Writing on April 19th, he proceeded to say:—

"One Circumstance, however, I forgot to mention, viz.: that she will expect Tea to Breakfast, as she has always been in the use of getting it in former Services, and has likewise used it when living at her own Expense. But this will be but a trifling Charge, and what I'm persuaded you'll not grudge, especially if she answers that part of her Character of being thrifty and a good Economist; it will only be giving her a little brown Sugar to use with Tea you leave in the Pot."

Alas, however, for human hopes! Mistress Thane may have been all that Mrs. Gerard had believed, but, like many otherwise excellent servants, she could not get on with her own equals. On Feb. 11th, and March 30th, 1772, letters passed between the Bishop and his Nephew, from which we learn that there was a 'demelee' amongst the domestics, the result of which was that the decision was reached that 'Mary must go!'

Passing on now to the Bishop's *health*, there is some information forthcoming. Although he had already reached the Psalmist's three-score years and ten, he was still holding out well upon the whole. On Feb. 9th, 1761, Arthur Petrie wrote to him:—

"I heartily wish your Convenience could allow you to take a while at Peterhead Waters the Season ensuing, and spend a few weeks among your Friends, as I could and would most cheerfully supply [*i.e.* your pastoral duties at Alloa] for you during your Absence."

About this time also, although there was an epidemic raging in the north with such fierceness that no less than 14 people were lying dead at once in the Parish of Mortleach, Mr. Petrie could write to his Uncle:—

"It gives me inexpressible Pleasure that, amongst the many Instances of People having been distressed with Sickness, etc., you yourself are not included. May God long preserve your Life and Health to be a support to the Church, and a Comfort to your Relations and Friends!"

In the early Summer of 1764, he contemplated a visit to Aberdeen so that he might have the pleasure of seeing his friend, Bishop Gerard, who seemed to be failing, but on March 1st, 1765, he had the following less favourable account of himself to give to his Nephew:—

“My Cold and Cough and rheumatick Pains have confined me to the House for the greatest Part of the Winter, which has been very inconstant and stormy and neither my Health nor the Weather is as yet much improved.”

By the Autumn, however, he was much better, for on Sept. 21st, he wrote to Arthur:—

“I thank my God I find myself greatly better in my Health, since you left this.”

We gather casually that the Bishop was an extremely *generous* man, according to his means. In a single letter, dated March 27th, 1765, he mentions three instances which prove it, and more of the same kind might easily be adduced from other letters:—

“I shall not grudge him [*i.e.* Sandie Gordon’s Brother] a yoke of oxen, poor fellow, to help to set him up. . . . ’Tis little I can spare and the Relation is remote but I sent her [*i.e.* Jean Ramsay, who was anxious to be married] a Mite. . . . John Adie’s Son, Charles, who has been at the Medical College, Edinburgh, and intends for the West Indies, has also wanted Assistance—all which keeps me low.”

On Jan. 23rd, 1759, Mr. Tower had written:—

“I received your Letter with one enclosed to my Wife with three Bank-notes in it and it came in a very seasonable time to us; we had not so much need of it this thirty years by gone.”

And on Feb. 9th, 1761, to Arthur Petrie:—

“I gave the two pounds sterling to Aunt Jean, as you desired, for which she was very thankful.”

Moreover he not only gave money but was also ready to take trouble for other people. Thus on March 27th, 1765, he informed his Nephew that he was using his influence to get the son of Mr. Morrice, Presbyter at Auchindore, settled as a tutor at Bannockburn.

Both on account of the Bishop’s great affection for the *Rev. Arthur Petrie*, his nephew, and also because the latter was well worthy of affection and respect and ultimately lived to be one of the Consecrators of Bishop Seabury, we shall find room here for a short notice of his doings during this period. It was now that he was ordained and settled in a pastoral charge. At this time, Mr. Lunan, Senior, Presbyter at Wartle and Meiklefolla, in

Aberdeenshire, was unequal to his work on account of age and infirmity. The Bishop of the Diocese [*i.e.* Gerard] was anxious that Arthur should go to his aid as assistant and successor, and the young man could give only one reason for not going :—

“ For my own share (he wrote to his Uncle) I would have no objection against the Settlement, were it not so remote from you.”

Another difficulty also was raised, however, and that was Mr. Lunan's obstinate resistance to the plan. The Rev. George Innes (of Aberdeen) went, indeed, and “ reasoned furiously with him,” but all to no purpose. Nevertheless Providence removed this impediment for, “ after a short warning,” Mr. Lunan died. In November his son was settled in his late father's house at Wartle, and Mr. Petrie, who had begun to officiate at Meiklefolla, in a house of his own in that place, with a niece to manage for him. On Aug. 17th, 1762, he reported to his Uncle :—

“ The building of our [Meeting] House at Meiklefolla goes on briskly. It is 64 ft. in length and 14 ft. broad, and there is a place set apart for making an Addition by way of our Ile [Aisle] in the Spring, if necessary.”

On June 1st, 1764, his news was that he was adding a kitchen and a byre to his dwelling.

During this period there is also evidence that the Bishop was interested in his other nephews, Sandie and Johnnie Allan, the former of whom, while holding the tutorship at Balnamoon, near Brechin, to which we have already seen him appointed, tried for a bursary at S. Andrews, while his brother did the same at Aberdeen, and neither of them unsuccessfully (March 23rd and Aug. 17th, 1762).

(2) *Blairgowrie*. Mr. Hill has no entries in his *Session-Book* for 1760 and 1761, but they begin again in 1762, in which year Muirton is the principal scene of his ministrations, but, curiously enough, his entries altogether cease in the same year. The Baptisms for that twelvemonth numbered eight. Information from other sources forthcoming at this time is that the Rev. James Brown wrote to the Bishop on Aug. 27th, 1762, saying that he had had a letter from the Rev. J. Hill advising him as to his choice of duty, and we remember how the older man had helped the younger on the road to Holy Orders, when the latter was schoolmastering at Forfar and been present at his Ordination in Alloa on April 16th, 1760. On Aug. 17th, 1762, the Rev. Arthur Petrie informed his uncle that he had recently seen Mr. Hill in Forfar. On June 24th, 1762, our Presbyter was present in the Bishop's Chapel in Alloa at the Ordination of the Rev. William Smith, of whose Ordination the account is given above. As we have seen, Mr. Hill was appointed Dean of Dunkeld in succession to Dean Guthrie at the Synod of 1764.

(3) *Carsebank*. It has been already recorded that, after an epistolary mention of *Dean Guthrie* as still to the fore in 1762, he is not mentioned again until the Synod of 1764, at which assembly it is assumed as generally known that he is no longer alive. The result with regard to the office of Dean has just been noted above. This, however, is the place to describe the effect at Carsebank. It is described in the following extract from the Minutes of the Synod of 1764 :—

“ Mr. Hill then laid before the Brethren the state of the Congregation vacant by the death of the Very Rev. David Guthrie, their late worthy Dean, and upon examination there appearing no visible fund for the support of a Clergyman within the Bounds of that Congregation, and, the the advice of the principal Hearers being previously obtained, they were recommended to the pastoral Care of the most adjacent Clergyman. The greatest part of them was recommended to the pastoral Care of the Rev. Mr. Skene at Forfar, and if any of them shall find it convenient to apply for Divine Ordinances to any Clergyman not in the Bounds of this District [*i.e.* Diocese of Dunkeld], Mr. Hill was desired to apply to the proper Bishop for his concurrence to admit them, till such time as it may please God to provide a Settlement of a Clergyman within the Bounds of the now vacant Congregation.”<sup>1</sup>

And so the number of charges in Dunkeld was now reduced to six! The discouragement continually caused by this steady decrease of numbers must have made a very serious demand upon the faith of the Churchmen who remained!

Dean Guthrie's Chapel was situated about two miles to the east of Forfar, past the present village of Carsebarracks, near Pitscandly, on rising ground in a field at the junction of the road leading north from the old Brechin road towards Carsebank and other farms. No doubt after his death the deserted building would stand for many years comparatively intact; but after a time it would fall in ruins and its materials be used for secular purposes. There were still some remains about 1879, but at that date the farmer tenant of Chapel Croft used the surviving stones for road metal!

(4) *Forfar*. The fortunes of the neighbouring Congregation of Forfar were very different. Under the care of the Rev. George Skene it continued to flourish and expand. The following particulars are available for this period.

<sup>1</sup> The remarkable trust in the future of the Church manifested in these last words was not justified for 132 years, *i.e.* until 1896. Then at last a Mission was opened in Carsebarracks by the Rev. Hugh MacKean and the Rev. A. Wood, and this was followed by the building of a beautiful Stone Chapel through the munificence of Mrs. Gray of Carse, in memory of her husband.

Mr. Skene was twice in Alloa, as we have already seen, assisting at the two Ordinations held by Bishop Alexander in his Chapel there, viz. :—that of his young friend, Mr. James Brown, on April 16th, 1760, and that of Dean Hill's candidate, Mr. William Smith, on June 24th, 1761.

The same day next year, June 24th, 1762, the feast of S. John the Baptist, was a red-letter day in the history of the Church in Forfar. An Episcopal Synod, about the general bearings of which more will be said later on, was held in Mr. Skene's Chapel. Three Bishops were present at it, and a fourth was consecrated. We can picture Mr. Skene, therefore, as feeling responsible for the smooth working of the externals of the important meeting. We can see him procuring offers of hospitality for the Prelates, and being particularly careful to provide comfortable entertainment for frail old Bishop Gerard of Aberdeen, who, being unable to accomplish the journey like his brethren, on horseback, was obliged to travel, along with a Chaplain to look after him, in a chaise all the way from Aberdeen. We can also see our Presbyter doing his best to make his humble Meeting House at 131 East High Street as presentable for the occasion as possible, and dreaming apparently impossible dreams of the erection of a proper Church in Forfar !

In the same year he was instrumental in getting "Sandy Allen," the Bishop's nephew, settled as tutor in the family of Balnamoon, near Montrose, as already recorded.

Nothing is forthcoming for the year 1763, but, of course, Mr. Skene was present at the Synod of 1764, which has been described earlier in the chapter. Of all men he was one of those who would be likely to have sanguine feelings stirred within him by the re-assembling of that body after so long and dreary an interval.

The recommendation made by the Synod in consequence of the impossibility of appointing a successor to the late Dean Guthrie, *i.e.* that the greater part of the Carsebank congregation should pass under his care, tended to strengthen the Forfar Congregation.

As for the Baptisms, the increase in their number which had marked the last three years of the reign of George II. was more than maintained in the present period. From 1760 onwards the numbers, including 25 cases of adult Baptism, stood as follows :—18, 22, 17, 19, 27 ; and we now find that Mr. Skene himself was a married man, for the infant who was christened on Nov. 27th, 1764, was a son of his own called George Alexander, the clergyman who officiated on the occasion being Mr. Skene's old friend, Dean Hill.

(5) *Meigle*. Meigle is the next charge about which we have any information belonging to this period. The Rev. J. Crokat's

name, however, disappears after the '45, and, as the Rev. Fr. Crombie, who formerly was described as being "of Alyth" (as on Nov. 15, 1743, D.R.) is described as "of Fullarton" which is close to Meikle, in 1764, it is evident that this Presbyterian succeeded Mr. Crokat after the Rising, and united the two charges of Alyth and Meikle. On Aug. 17th, 1762, the Rev. Arthur Petrie wrote as follows to Bishop Alexander :—

"At Perth I saw Mr. Crombie, who indeed, I think, looks very ill."

In the account of the Synod two years later, we have seen that this Presbyterian's pre-Culloden office of Synod Clerk was continued to him, but Mr. Petrie's information helps us to understand, or at least to conjecture, why it was that so long as the old man held the office, the work of recovering missing records and entering them in the Register was neglected.

(6) *Perth*.—On May 10th, 1762, the Rev. G. Innes wrote<sup>1</sup> to the Bishop :—

"As I expect to have the pleasure of seeing you here soon after Trinity, I beg you'll be so good, whenever you have fixed your time, to let me know as near as may be the day on which you intend to be in Perth, that I may not be absent when you come."

Ten days later he presents us with a not unfamiliar little drama :—

"You would hear that I have lost Miss Murray<sup>2</sup> as a parishioner, the most considerable one I had to lose, and if my information be good, she is lost to us all. The Laird, they say, being positive not to let her hear a Nonjuror. Be that as it may, he has attended the Kirk ever since his Marriage, which he did not rise to do before."

On July 12th of the same year, Bishop Forbes visited the Fair City on his way to his northern Diocese :—<sup>3</sup>

"At Bridge of Earn of several arches at a half after seven, where a toll is paid for all machines and four-footed beasts. At Perth by 8 p.m., a Royal Burgh, pleasantly situated on the west bank of the Tay between two beautiful natural greens called the South Inch and the North Inch, *Tuesday, July 13th*, Set out from Perth half after six in the morning and had a most charming road to Dunkeld, where we arrived 10 minutes before 10."

On Aug. 17th, 1762, the Rev. Arthur Petrie wrote to the Bishop :—

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. H. P.* 213.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. H. P.* 206.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. H. P.* 213-4.

"After parting from you at Alloa on the Wednesday I reached Perth at one o'clock [and] dined with Mr. Innes."

On his way south, Bishop Forbes again passed through the city:—

"Sept. 1, 1762. Set off from Inver of Dunkeld 20 minutes before 10 o'clock. . . . We arrived at Perth 24 minutes before 1 o'clock. As the Rev. George Innes spent the evening [with me] here [when I was] going northward, I now sent for him to dine with me, but he was gone a-visiting in the country."

All we know about the "Qualified" Chapel at this period is that the Rev. Mr. Wood, who took charge of it in 1750 stayed only a few years and was succeeded by the Rev. John Cameron, who remained all through the years, with which we are dealing.<sup>1</sup>

This already exhausts the Diocese of Dunkeld and brings us to that of Dunblane:—

(7) *Doune*. We have a passing glimpse of the Rev. Charles Rose on Sept. 21st, 1761. The Primus, Bishop White, had died three weeks earlier, and a successor to him as Pastor of the Congregation in Cupar-Fife was needed, and the following extract from a letter written by Bishop Alexander<sup>2</sup> shows us that those who were responsible for finding a Presbyter were turning their eyes towards Doune:—

"[Bp.] F[alconar] will have told you [*i.e.* the Rev. Robert Forbes] that the Cupar folks have turned their eyes on C[harles] Rose."

It was very natural that they should have done so, for as will be remembered, he was the son of Bishop James Rose of Fife, who was Bishop White's predecessor in the pastorate at Cupar.

"But (continues Bishop Alexander) he declines accepting, and unless White [*i.e.* Bishop White's son] do, they seem inclined to declare for a Qualified House."

Mr. Rose, therefore, continued at Doune. [What happened at Cupar does not appear. Bishop Alexander's private opinion<sup>3</sup> of the Primus's son was that he was a very vain young man, but, of course, he would much have preferred that, whatever his faults may have been, he should have accepted the charge and kept it loyal, than that it should be altogether withdrawn from the Scottish Bishops' jurisdiction. He did not, however, and the Rev. Thomas Young<sup>4</sup> was appointed, but whether as a Qualified man, or not, is unknown].

<sup>1</sup> *S. John's Register*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Chest.* 44.

<sup>4</sup> *Year Book*.

On Oct. 1st, 1762, Mr. Rose wrote from Doune to the Bishop concerning an expected visit of the latter, and asking him to bring two bottles of Claret for use in the Holy Communion and he was present on May 25th, 1763, at Mr. Smith's Ordination by Bishop Alexander in Alloa.

(8) *Muthill*. The Congregation here was gallantly holding its own under the Ministry of the Rev. William Erskine. A paper in his handwriting,<sup>1</sup> bearing no date, but probably belonging to post-Culloden days, gives a list of the flock, shewing the number to be 240. They worshipped in the Chapel, which had been destroyed in 1746, and afterwards repaired. From the *Baptismal Register* we obtain the following numbers for the years 1760-1765 (inclusive):—14, 17, 16, 18, 21, 20. Mr. Erskine gives the occupations of the parents even less than does Mr. Skene, but amongst the 106 included in the foregoing figures we have the Lairds of Condy, Inchbrakie, Gask, Ardoch, Cultowhey, and Garvoch; also a Surgeon and a Baker. On Dec. 4th, 1762, Bishop Alexander wrote:—"Erskine . . . has been ill of a fever."

(9) *Touch and Stirling*. Although Bishop Alexander had not jurisdiction over the Rev. Ninian Niving's congregation at Stirling, yet he was so close a neighbour to him at Alloa and his claim over the Rev. James Brown of Touch seems to be so clear, that we will give the following items concerning them here. As for *Touch*:—On March, 19th, 1762, Mr. Brown wrote to the Bishop informing him of the recent discovery of books hidden in a box in Hamilton's rooms in Holyrood, stolen from the Court in the time of Queen Mary and throwing light on the doings of Regents Morton and Murray. He wrote again on Aug. 27th, Oct. 16th, and Dec. 12th, of the same year, chiefly concerning books, and of his own intention to devote his life to the pastoral office. On Feb. 5th, 1763, the Bishop informed Arthur Petrie that Mr. Brown was giving up his position at Touch. Probably he found that his tutorial work there interfered with his ministerial duties.

And as for *Stirling*, the Bishop wrote on Dec. 4th, 1762:—"Mr. Niving I fear is in a dying way," and again on Feb. 5th, 1763:

"Poor Mr. Niving died on S. John's Day. There are great divisions among the People, some pushing for a Qualified man; others against a Usager, [*i.e.* they would remain loyal to the Bishops but wished to have a Non-usager Clergyman]; but, as to that, they have no choice [*i.e.* there were no Non-Usagers to be had] and I hope they will at last centre in Mr. Cheyne [a very decided Usager], who is come down to look after his Father-in-law's [*i.e.* Mr. Niving's?] affairs."

<sup>1</sup> *Shepherd* 28.

On May 3rd, of the same year, the Bishop lets us see that Mr. Cheyne was appointed. He said :—

“ Mr. Cheyne is in England and little Smith supplies the Interim and is to be Presbyterate here next Ember week.”

The Ordination was duly performed :—<sup>1</sup>

“ *Alloa, May 25th, 1763, Wednesday in Whitsunday, Ember Week.* Mr. Wil. Smith, Deacon, was ordained Priest in the Chapel there [*i.e.* Alloa] to serve a Congregation in England, at the desire of Bishop Gordon there—present, Mr. Charles Rose in Doun, and Mr. George Hewett in Newmilns, Priests.”

Thus Bishop Alexander's Diocese had survived the fifteen years of storm between 1745 and 1760, and they breathed again and gathered together the fragments that remained. Not yet indeed could they feel secure. The persecution which they had undergone had reduced them “to the shadow of a shade,” and the penal laws, although they were not being actively enforced, still held their place on the statute book, but in the meantime there was a lull, which they could enjoy and tremblingly hope for the best.

<sup>1</sup> D.R.



## CHAP. XVII.

1760-1765.—*General Church Affairs, i.e. Falconar, Primus; Consecration of Bishop Forbes, and a new Edition of the Scottish Office.*

Passing on now from the state of Dunkeld and Dunblane during these early years of George III., we return to that of the Church at large in the same period.

(1) At the end of Chapter XV. we left off with the Consecration of Bishop Edgar, as Coadjutor to the Primus (White), at Cupar Fife on Oct. 18th, 1759. On that occasion, as the result of a compromise, Bishop White had been commissioned as Primus to issue a Mandate for an Episcopal election to the Clergy of Ross and Caithness on the one condition that they would express regret for having, on their own account and without the authority of the Bishops, united the two vacant Dioceses. Bishop Alexander, however, who, as we know, was especially anxious to procure the issue of this Mandate for the northern Clergy, had left Cupar Fife somewhat troubled by a suspicion that after all the Primus intended to hamper the Mandate<sup>1</sup> by laying down an unauthorised condition to the effect that the electors must choose one of the already consecrated Prelates, *i.e.* Bishop Falconar.<sup>2</sup>

As was proved by what followed, his fears were not groundless. To begin with, the real state of affairs amongst the Ross and Caithness Clergy was indeed as follows:—

“Some posts ago (said Bishop Alexander on Jan. 21st, 1760) Br[other] G[erard] wrote me that he had a Letter from the Northern Clergy intimating that our Primus’s from Cupar of Nov. 1st was come to their hand, in which they were struck with Consternation to find they had fallen under our Displeasure, for, as is said, unwarrantably encroaching upon our Rights by uniting the Districts of Ross and Caithness. They express their Concern for having unwittingly and undesignedly fallen into this mistake.”

But, notwithstanding this apologetic attitude taken up on their part, there was an ominous delay on the side of the Primus in issuing the Mandate. Three months after its authorization by the Episcopal Synod, it was not yet out.

<sup>1</sup> *Scottish*. 308-9.

<sup>2</sup> C.’s Bp. F. 17.

Bishop Alexander therefore tried to hasten matters by writing to Bishop Falconar, who, he thought, would have influence with the Primus as being the Prelate, whom the latter wished to see elected for the vacant Diocese. But that peaceable and dilatory man was still slow to move. Bishop Alexander could get nothing out of him. He therefore wrote to the Rev. R. Forbes :—

“ I shall say nothing more at present but refer you to the enclosed scroll of a Letter, which I sent with this same Carrier to Longum [*i.e.* Bishop Falconar<sup>1</sup>]. I have fairly put him to the Test [*i.e.* urged him to use his influence to hasten the issue of the Mandate]. You'll perhaps find out whether it makes any Impression. I should think he could not avoid giving me an Answer.”

In another letter<sup>2</sup> to Mr. Forbes, dated Feb. 11th, 1760, he has heard from the Primus at last, but in a most unsatisfactory sense. Bishop White, instead of issuing the Mandate to Ross and Caithness, is harking back to his own rejected scheme of having his recently consecrated Coadjutor made full Diocesan of Glasgow, and he is affecting to believe that this can now be done, inasmuch as Bishop Alexander has at length given his consent. Our Bishop informs his correspondent that, in making such an assertion, the Primus is founding upon words of his interpreted in a wrong sense. He had indeed said that *if (emphatically if) the majority of the Bishops insisted on having the Coadjutor elected to a Diocese, they must do as they liked, he could not stop them.* He admitted that he had said that, but pointed out that it did not imply that in such a problematical contingency he would give his vote in favour of the step being taken. Quite the contrary. Even if he were left in the minority he would continue to disapprove of the Primus's scheme.<sup>3</sup>

It was disappointing to have this controversy revived. The Primus's purpose seemed to be simply to distract attention from the non-issue of the northern Mandate. However, about the beginning of May, he had received the formal letter of Apology from the Rossians, and it might have been thought that he could not now avoid issuing the Mandate. But no ! He began to make out that the apology was insufficient. Without sending it to the other Bishops, he simply informed them that it was unsatisfactory.

In answer to that, Bishop Alexander wrote<sup>4</sup> to Bishop Falconar on May 5th :—

<sup>1</sup> That ‘ Longum ’ is Bishop Falconar, I infer from an MS. which is signed “ W. F. B. ad Longum ” *i.e.* William Falconar, Bishop of Moray at a distance,” for he lived in Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Scotich.* 308-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 42.

"The Primus . . . ought either to have sent the Presbyters' letter itself, or an authenticated Copy of it, that we might have been able to form a Judgment from their own words, how far their acknowledgment was satisfactory. Even as he has represented it, it is so to me, for you know I never thought the Crime so atrocious, and I once thought neither did you, as to need much Attonement, and it was only to please my Brethren that I went into that Measure [*i.e.* of requiring an apology at all]. The Fault, if any, was owing to others more than to them and whatever Denomination they assumed to themselves in their Address . . . they here deny any Intention of uniting the Districts or encroaching on our Rights. In fair Construction, when they call themselves 'united' it can only be 'united' in their Application to us."

But not only did the Primus make difficulties about accepting the unfortunate Presbyters' apology—action in which he might at least have been formally within his rights—but he hit upon another way also of impeding the issue of the Mandate, or at all events of emptying it of value when issued, and that was by proposing to dictate to the electors the person, on whom their choice must fall.

The actual range of their selection is pretty well set forth to us in a letter dated Nov. 14th, 1759, written by Dr. Abernethy to Bishop Alexander, which has the additional interest for us of shewing us that divine's opinion of several Presbyters, with whom we are by this time pretty well acquainted:—

"If there be nobody fitter in the North than Forbes [who is in the South] undoubtedly he [*i.e.* Forbes] ought to be promoted; for indeed he is the proposed in that Country [*i.e.* Ross and Caithness], except Niving [of Stirling], and I am sure he [*i.e.* Niving] will never undertake a charge so far off from him. Against J. Leith [of Huntly, Aberdeenshire] I find there are insuperable objections [for that he is tainted with Mysticism<sup>1</sup>]. But I think I have heard you or somebody speak of Stewart at Tain<sup>2</sup> as a sensible, honest Man. And is not Mr. Jaffray at Loanmay a Man of character and substance too? To me they are both Strangers, as indeed are almost all of the Clergy. Among such as I do know, except Mr. Guthrie [of Carsebank], Geordie Innes [of Aberdeen] and Hill [of Blairgowrie], there is not one that I could wish to see a Bishop, which

<sup>1</sup> R.F. to Bp. A., April 24, 1759.

<sup>2</sup> "The leisurely asthmatic Mr. Stewart," who actually expected to persuade Robert Forbes that "20 Scots miles made a good day's journey!" —C.'s *Caithness*, p. 236-7.

is a most miserable case. God pity us and send forth more and worthier Labourers into the Vineyard."<sup>1</sup>

There was some range of choice therefore for the prospective electors, but, as has been said, the Primus was determined to allow them none. Bishop Alexander on his side was vehemently anxious that they should have an unconditionally free Mandate granted them, to elect whomsoever they chose, and expressed himself in private strongly on the point.<sup>2</sup> To our surprise, however, we find his name appended to the Mandate, which finally appeared containing the following limitation of freedom of choice on the electors' part, evidently meant to prohibit them from electing the Rev. F. Forbes, who was their preference:—

"We do hereby impower and authorise the Rev. Mr. Ludovick Grant in Channery of Ross to convocate you [*i.e.* the Clergy of Ross and Caithness], as he shall judge most prudent, or find most convenient, to elect *one from yourselves, or whose place of residence is contiguous to you.*"

In explanation of the appearance of our Bishop's signature to such a Mandate as this, after all that had gone before, it is only fair to say that Bishop Falconar had allowed himself to be overborne by the Primus.<sup>3</sup> Bishop Alexander, therefore, finding himself in a minority thought it better to sign the document than by withholding his signature to proclaim to the world a dispute within the Episcopal College.

The Primus having now carried his point proceeded to 'rub it in.' In forwarding the much delayed Mandate to the North, he wrote a long letter to the Rossians, dated from Cupar on May 20th, 1760, in which he informed them that the Bishops had accepted their apology and that their right of election was recognised. But he said, in the name of the Bishops, that they were requested voluntarily to forego the exercise of this right at least in the meantime, and he added that in any case:—

"My chief Intention of taking Notice of this Limitation is to let you understand that, possessed of this Mandate, you cannot by Virtue of it let your Choice fall on the Person you seem to have had in view, I mean the Rev. Mr. Forbes at Leith."

On August 20th, the Rev. L. Grant wrote to the Primus acknowledging the receipt, first of his letter, and secondly of the Mandate. He then goes on thus:—

<sup>1</sup> We should have expected Mr. Forbes to mention Mr. Erskine of Muthill, now aged about 60. Mr. Skene of Forfar was only 33 at the present time. But he was only writing *currente calams*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Bp. A. to Mr. Forbes, May 12th, 1760.*—"F. held forth . . . in the Strain of the Conversation he had with you pleading strongly for a delay of both H. E[dgar] and you till a more favourable juncture."

“ Though we humbly acknowledge that we do not relish well the Restrictions in the Mandate, yet, as we do not take upon us to dispute the Reasons and Motives that obliged your Primus to limit us to them, we hope it will not give Offence to our R. R. Superiors that we decline to elect, according to these limitations, as they appear to us in the light that we view them, not easily reconcileable to the inherent Right of our own Order. Therefore we think it advisable to suspend any further prosecuting of our Affair at this Time, till a more favourable Opportunity may offer.”

Thus the Primus triumphed. He had first refused to issue a Mandate at all, and when at long last Bishop Alexander succeeded in obliging him to issue one, he had so contrived that it was a useless one.

By this time, however, he was becoming more and more physically infirm. Indeed in this fact we may see the reason which induced Bishop Falconar to give in to him and desert Bishop Alexander. He foresaw that Bishop White could not last long, and thought it the best policy to let the masterful old man have his way without opposition for the brief remainder of his days, trusting that it would not be long before Bishop Alexander's policy would be carried out. So long ago as Feb. 11th, Bishop Alexander had himself said :—

“ I am afraid he [*i.e.* the Primus] is declining fast, so Lunan, who was lately there, writes to me he thinks.”

After living on for a year subsequent to the receipt of Mr. Grant's letter, he died, as Bishop Falconar wrote to inform his brother of Dunkeld, on Aug. 16th, 1761.

It is only fair to Bishop White to remember that we have not his own record of the motives which animated him in the foregoing transactions, and we ought therefore to interpret them as charitably as possible. But a review of the course of events does seem to prove that Bishop Alexander's contention was correct, viz. :—that he was aiming at the aggrandizement of his own power, on the one hand by investing his Coadjutor with a Diocesan's vote in the Episcopal Synod, and on the other by keeping Ross and Caithness vacant, or at all events of preventing their election of the Rev. R. Forbes, who was not a *persona grata* to himself. Doubtless he was persuaded that, if he had practically untrammelled management of affairs, it would be a happy thing for the Church, but there can be little doubt that Bishop Alexander shewed himself wise and strong in setting his face against the creation of an autocracy in the College of Bishops and a practical relapse into the old system of a Metropolitan, which had been unanimously abandoned by all parties in the Concordate of 1731. As for the rest, Bishop White deserved well of the Church by

helping Bishop Rattray to overthrow the Metropolitan autocracy of Bishop Freebairn (1735-1739); by reviving the Diocese of Dunblane (1735-1743); and, as far as our information goes, doing the same in Fife in 1743-4.<sup>1</sup>

A circumstance which confirms us in the belief that the foregoing estimate of his conduct as Primus is correct, appears in the fact that immediately after his death all the difficulties with regard to Bishop Edgar's position and the election in the north vanished. How that happened must now be related.

Of course there was some delay, more indeed than was necessary, and also rather prolonged discussion amongst the Bishops as to the best way of settling affairs under the new circumstances, but whatever controversy there was, can well be described as simply designed to discover the best method of procedure.

On August 29th, 1761, Bishop Alexander wrote to the Rev. R. Forbes as follows:—<sup>2</sup>

"F. [*i.e.* Bishop Falconar] is now the Person, who should act, but he is very slow."

On the subject of that worthy Prelate's slowness, Mr. Forbes, who was himself practical, energetic, and mercurial, is quite amusing. He had a nickname for every one, and that which he had coined for Bishop Falconar was 'Modestus.' On March 12th, 1759, therefore, he wrote:—

"Modestus, with whom paper, pen, and ink are really a *Noli me tangere*, insomuch that I wish he may not forget how to subscribe his own Name!"

And again on April 24th:—

"Indeed Modestus scarce corresponds with anybody but with Bibliopoles [he already had 12 editions of Virgil, 8 or 9 of Horace, etc. Moreover in the kindness of his heart he had become financially responsible for a relative with the result that he had to pay up very heavily], in which his attention is so much engaged that, if you tell him anything to-day, he forgets in two or three days that any such thing was ever said to him and will stoutly maintain his Assertion, of which I myself have had several specimens of late. . . . One would think he had the Gout in the Sword hand, such ill-will has he to pen and ink, even when actual Business calls. His poor brother of London [*i.e.* Bishop Gordon] complains to me sadly of his Neglect in that way towards him. I have told him of it, but to no Purpose!"

<sup>1</sup> A long letter from Bishop White dated March 22nd, 1740, is given by T.S. on pp. 373-376.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 43.

Thus on the present occasion Bishop Alexander found the senior Bishop "very slow." He added :—

" R. [*i.e.* Bishop Rait] is next and I intend to wait their actions patiently without disturbing myself or others to no Purpose."

However, they got things into motion after a time. At first some plan, which is not fully detailed, but by which both Bishop Edgar would have been continued as a Coadjutor and also the Rev. R. Forbes raised to a similar position, was discussed and received the approval of Mr. Forbes. But Bishop Alexander for very honourable reasons, refused to give it his support. He wrote in that sense as follows to Mr. Forbes on Aug. 29th, 1761 :—

" The Scheme in your last I like very well and should rejoice to see it fairly executed, but cannot have an active hand in it, because in all my letters to W. [*i.e.* the late Primus] and even to E[dgard] himself, I professed a Desire to see a fair and regular Election in his Favour, that he might take his Seat among us [*i.e.* as a Diocesan] with Honour. . . . I immediately communicated your Scheme to Bonaccord [*i.e.* Bishop Gerard] and shewed him how my hands were bound up. Perhaps he may not have the same Reasons for being passive."

As a matter of fact, he had not and he became the Episcopal champion of the scheme.

Erelong, however, he found that he stood alone in its support, and accordingly wrote thus :—

" I find as I foresaw Br[other] R[ait] utterly averse, as I doubt not A. [*i.e.* Bishop Alexander] to unnecessary Coadjutors ; for which and other Reasons I have passed from the proposed Meeting and, to shew my hearty Inclinations for Peace and Union, I am content that both Bishop E. and R.F. come into their full local Right of Election and that Mandates in due form be given to the respective Presbyters " [*i.e.* of Fife, which was the late Primus's Diocese and of Ross and Caithness, which had been waiting so long].

On Sept. 21st. Bishop Alexander accordingly wrote to Mr. Forbes :—

" F. [*i.e.* Bishop Falconar] will have told you the new Turn which your Affair has taken, the best, I think, it could have taken, as everything now goes on in an orderly way. I returned the Mandates signed to F. yesterday by yesterday's Post, and they want only to be forwarded to Dundee and Aberdeen, so that, if Expedition be used, the Delay cannot be of many weeks."

The results of both elections were satisfactory. Bishop Edgar was returned for Fife, and, as for the much-tried Presbyters of Ross and Caithness, although Bishop Alexander had in 1759 expressed his opinion in a letter to Bishop Falconar that two of their own number, *i.e.* Mr. Taylor<sup>1</sup> of Thurso and Mr. Stewart of Tain,

“ Were sufficient<sup>2</sup> men for the Office and either of them, being on the spot, can do more service than they, who [like Robert Forbes] live at a remote distance,”

yet the Electors agreed with our Bishop's later preference for Mr. Forbes and accordingly :—<sup>3</sup>

“ At Arpaphily in Ross on Oct. 14th, 1761, an election to the Sees of Ross and Caithness took place in his favour. The Deed is signed in Lud : Grant, Presbyter at Fortrose ; James Urquhart, Presbyter at Ord ; John Stewart, Presbyter at Tain ; and at Thurso Oct. 16, 1761, by James Taylor.”

Accordingly arrangements were made for the Consecration. It was considered desirable that Bishop Gerard should join in the solemn service but (March 11) although that Prelate :—

“ To our [*i.e.* Arthur Petrie's] great joy holds out surprisingly and preaches Diet about,”

he was in feeble health, and in the middle of May, suffering from “ a severe cold.” He was, therefore, unable to mount his horse and arranged to travel by chaise. He chose the Rev. Arthur Petrie for his travelling companion, to whom he wrote on June 10th, 1762, to the following effect :—

“ On this third Sunday after Trinity I'm afraid you cannot be there [*i.e.* at Wartle] for I intend, God willing, to set out for Forfar (to meet your Uncle, etc.) on the afternoon of Monday, 21st, or at farthest, early on the 22nd, so that you must come here [*i.e.* Aberdeen], either on Sunday afternoon, if you can reach this after Divine Service, or as soon as you can on Monday, in order to go along with me in the Chaise and return, or not, from Forfar as your Uncle and I shall agree . . . I intreat you may be here to dinner on Monday, 21st, because I may be obliged to set out hence in the afternoon of that day.”

<sup>1</sup> Note.—“ The Rev. James Taylor was ordained Deacon and Priest by Bishop Fullarton in Edinburgh in 1726 ; ministered in Shetland till 1729 ; moved to Old Meldrum and finally settled in Thurso under Bishop Keith in 1733. The letter of his Call to this last place is still extant, as are also letters of his to Bishop Keith in 1734 and 1739. Although he took no active part in the Rising of 1745, he was treated with prolonged and barbarous cruelty after Culloden and may be looked upon as a Confessor. The account of Bishop Forbes' visit to him in 1763 is pathetic reading. He died in 1763 and had no successor at Thurso.”—C.'s *Caithness*, pp. 226-234.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotich.* 304.

<sup>3</sup> C.'s *Caithness*, 235.

At the Synod, held on June 24th, 1762, in Mr. Skene's Meeting-House at Forfar (*in Capella Viri Reverendi, Georgii Skene, Presbyteri, in oppido Forfar*), Bishop Falconar was elected Primus; Bishop Edgar collated to Fife, and the Rev. Robert Forbes consecrated for Ross and Caithness.

On Sept. 25th, Arthur Petrie wrote to his Uncle :—

“ Your Accounts of Bishop F[orbes] give me great pleasure. Pray write me in your next how his promotion is relished in the Capital.”

The disaffected Edinburgh Clergy, indeed, might not much approve of the advancement of Mr. Law's colleague in Leith, but there is no doubt that by this Consecration a Bishop of the greatest practical ability, vigour and zeal was added to the Scottish Episcopate. He had been born<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Rayne, in the Garioch, Aberdeenshire, in the Spring of 1708, and was thus 54 at the time of his Consecration. His father was a successful schoolmaster, and in his boyhood the future Bishop learned his first lessons of Churchmanship from the Rev. Patrick Lunan, the “ Episcopal ” Clergyman in the neighbourhood. He graduated at Marischal College in 1726, and then probably acted as tutor in a private family. He came to Edinburgh in 1735, being already in Deacon's Orders, and was appointed assistant first to the Rev. Wm. Harper, Carrubbers' Close, and then to the Rev. Wm. Law, Leith. On May 9th, 1736, he was ordained Priest by Bishop Freebairn<sup>2</sup> and instituted as assistant and successor to Mr. Law. During his ministry in Leith he re-baptized Mr. John Skinner, afterwards known as *Tullochgorum*, who was doubtful about the validity of Presbyterian Sacraments, and during Prince Charles's Rising he was imprisoned from Sept. 7th, 1745, till May 29th, 1746. Indeed he was one of the most enthusiastic of Jacobites and was the compiler of that celebrated treasury of Jacobite relics known as *The Lyon in Mourning*. His wife shared his views, and used to send presents of home-made cake and marmalade to the exiled Prince.

“ On<sup>3</sup> one occasion Oliphant of Gask and his Lady were the bearers [from her] of a present of seed-cake. This, we are told, they took to the King, making a present of it to him, and withal telling him from whom they had it. ‘ Aye,’ said he, ‘ a piece of cake from Scotland, and from Edinburgh too ! ’ Then, rising from his seat, and opening a drawer :—‘ Here,’ said he, ‘ you see me deposit it and no tooth shall go upon it but my own ! ’ ”

No sooner was the Bishop consecrated than he made an energetic visitation of his northern diocese, during the course of which

<sup>1</sup> See Craven's *Life and Journals of Bishop R. Forbes*, pp. 1 to 14.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of Orders in T.C.

<sup>3</sup> Jacobite Lairds of Gask.

he confirmed as many as 616 people. Thus the result of the issue of the Mandate for Ross and Caithness, for which he had contended so long, and so strenuously, would fill Bishop Alexander with satisfaction and he would be ready to endorse the words, which Bishop Gerard wrote to him on Nov. 16th, 1762 :—

“ Our Bishop Forbes has favoured me with a full and particular Narrative of his progress through Ross and Caithness, which is very entertaining and agreeable. He has not judged amiss in cutting such a becoming figure on his travels . . . His handsome appearance and polite behaviour must make these people sensible of the Advantages of Church Communion and the few Remains of us still respectable among them.”<sup>1</sup>

He would also be ready at the end of 1762 to repeat words which he had himself used at the end of 1761 :—

“ We will all pass the Winter the more comfortably that our Affairs are settled and all Animosities, I hope, at a perpetual End.”

(2) We must now return to Edinburgh affairs. As we have already seen the disaffected Clergy there had elected one of their own number, the Rev. A. Robertson, to be their Bishop, but for very urgent reasons the Episcopal College had felt themselves obliged to refuse him. Still it was obviously a distressing thing that this quasi-schism should be allowed to drag on its weary length. Another attempt at negotiation was, therefore, made. In a letter<sup>2</sup> to the Rev. R. Forbes, dated Feb. 11th, 1760, Bishop Alexander made a somewhat obscure reference to “ the Elect.” In his next reference he gives us quite a vivid and personal glance into the progress of the endeavour. He tells us that the malcontents in Edinburgh had appealed to G. [*i.e.* Bishop Gordon] as arbiter in the dispute, inasmuch, it is to be supposed, as that Prelate was at once a Scot, an outsider, a Bishop and acceptable to the Episcopal College. They had sent an intermediary to him. Who was this intermediary? Bishop Alexander calls him C.S. And who was he? There can be little doubt that it was Charles Smith of Touch, for that gentleman, being a relative of the late Bishop Smith, would command the confidence of the Edinburgh party; being connected with Mrs. Gordon, whose sister was the wife of Bishop Smith, would have easy access to Bishop Gordon; living in Scotland would have an intimate knowledge of the situation, and was thus clearly marked out for the work of mediation. This Mr. Smith of Touch, therefore, we consider to have talked matters over with Bishop Gordon, with a view to inducing that Prelate to use his influence to induce the Scottish Bishops to listen favourably to the Edinburgh malcontents’ case.

<sup>1</sup> Collie MSS. C.’s Bp. F. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 41.

And he called on Bishop Alexander in the third week of August, 1761, who gives us the following account of his interview with him :—

“C.S. made me a Visit last Week. I delivered G.’s [*i.e.* Bishop Gordon’s] compliments, as Brown [the clerical Tutor at Touch] had done before. Company being present, I asked him into the garden, where we had a short Conference. All was smooth and consistent on both sides. I thus broke off :—

(*Bp. A.*). Sir, G. [*i.e.* Bishop Gordon] hints to me in his Letter, and I had heard the Rumour before, that the Edinburgh Clergy had made Proposals and had referred their Differences with us to his Decision, he says by a common Friend of both, which, I presume, is you.

(C.S.) Not I, (answered he) I never made any Reference.

(*Bp. A.*). I beg Pardon then for the Mistake, Sir, for I was happy in the Thoughts that the Affair was in the Hands of one, who, I hope, has the Peace and Welfare of the Church at Heart.

(C.S.) Sir, (said he) you are the proper Judges.

(*Bp. A.*) No doubt (said I) we must be acknowledged the lawful governors of the Church in this Kingdom. Yet, so conscious are we of not having given any just Provocation for some Persons to treat us with the Insolence and Indignity they have done, both in Writ and Print, which nevertheless we have all along borne patiently and answered discreetly, and so well apprized are we of B[p] G[ordon’s impartiality] that I believe all of us will be ready to stand with open arms, upon a due Submission and Acknowledgement and Return to their Duty, and, if you can be an Instrument of forwarding this, it will surely be very meritorious in you.

(C.S.) said he wished he could ; acknowledged that he had talked over the Affair pretty fully with G[ordon] ; talked much of Usages and Liturgies ; the unseasonable Heat of some Persons etc., to all of which I made the best Answer I could, and we parted good Friends. All this I entrust in Confidence to yourself alone ; let not his Name be blown, till we see what may be the consequence. I have communicated it only to Bonac [*i.e.* Bishop Gerard] and will not to any other till I write to G——n himself.”<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that Bishop Gordon made some sort of a communication to the Scottish Bishops. On Sept. 21, 1761, therefore, our Bishop wrote thus to Bishop Forbes :—

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 44.

"This Letter of Bishop G[ordo]n is a precious Jewel and shows the Author in the most lovely light. The Answer is altogether just and what you say of C.S. I believe will hold true ; yet, as you see, he [*i.e.* Bishop Gordon] has great Faith in him. I wish you had expressed your Suspicions not in quite so positive Terms as you have done, especially in the P.S."

Not yet, however, had the time arrived for the settlement of this long continued dispute. We might, indeed, have thought that their experiences since Culloden must by this time have persuaded both parties that the restoration of the Stewarts was now an idle dream ; and recognition of King George would at one and the same time have freed the malcontent Presbyters from the notion that they were still an "Established" Church, and the Bishops from the already explained dilemma, which prevented them consecrating a Bishop for Edinburgh. But human nature is human nature, and it was still too soon for those, whose relatives and friends had given their fortunes and lives for Prince Charlie, to confess that all had been in vain and to join with their persecutors. The political impasse, therefore, still remained in the background, and, more unfortunately still, personal misunderstandings had grown up and added to the difficulty.

That such was the case is clear from Bishop Alexander's statement to C.S. in the garden to the effect that the Bishops felt that they had been openly flouted. And here is another incident, related by Bishop Forbes in a letter addressed on Sept. 17th, 1762, to our Bishop, which goes to prove the both points :—

"On Tuesday forenoon last week, Mr. A. Robertson ['Bishop-elect' of Edinburgh], meeting with B[p] F[alconar] on the street, invited him to a glass of white wine. They housed accordingly, and no sooner was the Modicum presented, but up started Mr. Elect according to privilege [*i.e.* as Bishop of the Diocese] and said Grace. This flight Bishop F[alconar] easily got over."

Thereafter Mr. Robertson began to complain because the Bishops had not recognised his election, and Bishop Falconar to defend them. The argument lasted for about 20 minutes. Finally :—

"B[p] F[alconar] was like to wax warm. He begged Mr. Elect to consider that it was not in the power of the Bishops [*i.e.* without *either* openly repudiating the Prince, or drawing the Government down on the Church] to gratify him and his fraternity in their demands, as Edinburgh was reserved by One, etc."

In the meantime therefore the unsatisfactory *status quo* continued.

(3) About this time our Bishop was concerned in another very important matter, namely the issue of a new edition of the Scottish Liturgy. In order that we may understand the exact nature of the step now taken with at least the tacit consent of the Episcopal College in this matter, it will be necessary to give a short account of the previous history of our Eucharistic Office, and this we shall do relying upon the authority of Bishop Dowden's *Annotated Scottish Office*.

It is well known, therefore, that during its second period of "Establishment" (1662-1689) the worship of the Episcopal Church was, although not absolutely, yet very much, the same as that which prevailed amongst the Presbyterians. The introduction of the Prayer Book in 1637 had produced a disastrous explosion, and it was considered more prudent not to repeat the experiment, at all events in the meantime. After the Disestablishment of 1689, however, and especially in the reign of Queen Anne, Churchmen felt exempted from prolonging such a self-denying ordinance, and the English Book of Common Prayer came more and more into use.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, as witnessed by the reprinting of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637 in 1712 for use in the Earl of Winton's Chapel, and the fact that Bishop Rose and others began to introduce additional Prayers, such as the Invocation,<sup>2</sup> when using the English Office, a desire sprang up among the 'liturgical' party for something fuller and richer than the Communion Service of the English Book. The English Nonjurors' Office of 1718 was not indeed adopted, but in 1724 (or rather perhaps in 1722) Bishop Gadderar of Aberdeen reprinted in the form of what was called "a wee bookie" the Scottish Communion Office of 1637, beginning at the Offertory, and brought it into use, and those who adopted it, finding that upon the whole the order of the prayers in it was the same as that in the English Office, but, being persuaded by the Nonjurors' Liturgical investigations that this was not the ancient order, were in the habit of marking the Prayers on the margin of the page in such a manner that they read them in the order, to which we are now accustomed in the Scottish Office.<sup>3</sup> Thus what was practically adopted was the 1637 Liturgy re-arranged in the 1718 order. In the Concordate of 1731, it was authoritatively agreed:—"That we shall only make use of the Scottish or English Liturgy in public divine Service." "Strangely enough (adds Bishop Dowden), a change in the *order* of the prayers does not seem to have been regarded at this period as a violation of the agreement."<sup>4</sup> And it is at this stage of the development of the question that we first come across Bishop Alexander in connection with it. For in Bishop Jolly's Library<sup>5</sup> there is a copy of the original (1637) black letter folio of the Scottish Prayer Book thus marked in the margin and obviously meant for

<sup>1</sup> T.S. p. 200.<sup>2</sup> A.S.O. 71.<sup>3</sup> T.S. p. 202.<sup>4</sup> A.S.O. 79.<sup>5</sup> A.S.O. 80.

use at the Altar, and, of the two hands, to which the MS. numbering is due, Bishop Dowden is of opinion that the later is that of Bishop Alexander, whereby we learn that, with two unimportant exceptions, he conformed to the contemporary usage.

The next step was that in 1735 two booksellers, as a little commercial venture of their own, published an edition of the Office as thus used (with, however, the important variations of "Which we now offer unto Thee" in the Prayer of Oblation and the omission of the words "Militant here in earth" after "Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church"). This edition was reprinted in 1743, 1750, 1759, and 1764. Bishop Dowden says of it<sup>1</sup> —

"Though there is no sufficient reason for supposing that synodical authority was given to [it], there can be scarcely any doubt that it was according to this form that the Eucharist was ordinarily celebrated."

And it was doubtless of this form that the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth and Bishop Raitt of Brechin were speaking, the first in his letter addressed to Bishop Alexander on Nov. 28th, 1743,<sup>2</sup> and the second in his account of the Intrusion in Dundee.

In 1744, the year after our Prelate's Consecration, a work was published which was destined to modify the Scottish Liturgy in an interesting and important way. This was his learned predecessor, Bishop Rattray's, *The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem*. For hitherto the internal structure of the Prayer of Consecration had been that of the Prayer Book of 1637, viz. :—(1) Invocation ; (2) Institution ; and (3) Oblation ; but Bishop Rattray's "studies confirmed him in the conviction that the order of the parts of the Prayer of Consecration, which had been adopted in the Nonjurors' Office of 1718, viz. :—(1) Institution ; (2) Oblation ; and (3) Invocation, was the order of the Church's Liturgy in its earliest age."<sup>3</sup>

Of course this conclusion did not affect the Office, which was, being actually used immediately. Our Scottish Divines had to suffer some time to elapse before they had looked at the proposed change in every light. Bishop Rattray, indeed, had himself gone so far as to prepare an adaptation of S. James's Liturgy suitable for practical use and a movement seems to have been set on foot favourable to the actual adoption of this adaptation. But both Bishop Alexander and Bishop Gerard at first supported those who were opposed to the scheme. Writing to our Bishop in 1761, the Rev. G. Innes of Aberdeen, said :—<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A.S.O. 85-87.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ch.* XI. after (17).

<sup>3</sup> A.S.O. 89-90.

<sup>4</sup> T.S. 380.

“ Bishop Gerard bids me tell you that with regard to what Bishop Falconar proposes about altering or amending the Communion Office, he is not fond of any further alterations, as we have everything essential and our Enemies are so apt to make a bad use of anything of this kind.”

And in 1762 Bishop Alexander himself wrote :—<sup>1</sup>

“ It would be rash if not ruinous, to furnish our enemies with so specious a handle, as they would not fail to make of our offering to bring in S. James’s Liturgy at present. A proper time may come, which God grant may soon be ! ”

In due time, however, an opportunity, not, to be sure, of introducing S. James’s Liturgy, but of modifying the Scottish Office in accordance with Bishop Rattray’s investigations, presented itself. Bishop Falconar persisted in his endeavour.<sup>1</sup> In 1755, he issued an edition of the Scottish Office, in which the Prayer of Consecration, departing from the arrangement of its parts as found in the Book of 1637, was formed according to the order recommended by Bishop Rattray. Now, although this edition was not generally received, yet a few years later the Bishops seem to have issued a commission to Bishops Falconar and Forbes, the result of which was that in 1764 there was issued an edition of the Scottish Office, with the Prayer of Consecration arranged as advocated by Bishop Rattray, which practically drove the editions of the type of 1735 out of use and which, becoming the *Textus Receptus*, held the field substantially unmodified, until in 1911 another edition of the same type, only further enriched, was issued by the Episcopal Synod, and adopted as the canonical text by the Provincial Synod of 1911.

In the same year in which he was engaged in the revision of the Scottish Liturgy, Bishop Falconar was the leading actor in a very unusual incident, *i.e.* nothing less than the Consecration of a Presbyterian burying-ground, situated near *The Meadows* in Edinburgh. The prayers, which he used on the occasion are recorded by *Lawson* II. p. 319. The remarkable thing is that six members of the Kirk Session, were unofficially present, apparently as willing worshippers, and that nothing worse befel them than a formal rebuke from the body to which they belonged. Indeed Bishop Falconar, just because he was a quiet, absent-minded and unbusiness-like scholar, seems to have been allowed to do things without opposition, which, ventured by others, would have caused great uproar.

<sup>1</sup> A.S.O. 92.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### 1766-1770.—*General and Diocesan Affairs.*

It must not be supposed that because the penal laws had been, as a rule, but laxly enforced during the last five years, therefore the lot of Churchmen was now a happy one.

The very exchange of active persecution for cold and prolonged neglect brought with it trials of its own. On the one hand it deprived our people of the sympathy which is naturally extended to the weaker party when seen to be struggling in the grip of the stronger; and on the other the stimulus of romance was withdrawn, when, instead of being subjected to the blows of the law's "mailed fist," they were merely called upon to endure continuous, though quiet, contempt. That they felt the sting of the latter is evident from the following words of Dr. Abernethy, written in 1768:—<sup>1</sup>

"For most people are, and of a long time have been, almost afraid to be seen in the company of (at least they avoid having any intimacy with) Nonjurors, lest they be suspected of disaffection; and therefore from prudential motives they generally keep aloof from all of that stamp."

Moreover the hostile legislation remained on the Statute Book and could be held *in terrorem* over their heads by ill-conditioned persons. Of this we have had an example at Forfar, when the Qualified Clergyman, Mr. Ker, threatened to inform on Dean Seton because he exceeded the legal number at the Christmas Communion of 1749.

And that the fear caused by such threats was not altogether groundless was proved by what happened in the district of Buchan in 1770-1.<sup>2</sup> On the death of the Incumbent of Lonmay in the former of these years, Bishop Kilgour of Aberdeen, an account of whose consecration follows later in this chapter, appointed the Rev. William Sangster<sup>3</sup> to the vacant charge. The civil authorities

<sup>1</sup> "Remarks upon the 2nd Part of Norman Sievwright's Pamphlet." Edin., 1768, pp. 25-6.

<sup>2</sup> "1769-1773. From this period there is an entire dearth of intelligence of every sort."—T.S. p. 384. Of the same period, Dr. Grub (IV. p. 88) says no more than:—"For several years nothing of importance took place in the history of the Church." Skinner in his *Ecclesiastical History* passes these years over in silence. Whatever, therefore, is given in this, and the next chapters, as occurring between 1769-1773 may be looked upon as a contribution towards filling up the blank.

<sup>3</sup> W.'s Peterhead, p. 83.

were indignant because that Presbyter (like all his brethren with hardly an exception) was a Nonjuror, and they retaliated by closing not only the Church of Lonmay but also the Chapels in Peterhead and Fraserburgh. We have two references by Bishop Alexander to this recrudescence of active persecution. Writing to Arthur Petrie on Jan. 2nd, 1771, he said :—

“ I'll expect to hear per next the Result of Mr. Sangster's Process ; also how the Bishop and Mr. Durham act, or whether their Houses are really shut up.”

And again on February 4th :—

“ Your last of the 19th ulto. gave me the Pleasure to know that the Buchan Persecution has as yet produced no decisive Sentence against our Church amongst you and will expect by your next to know in what Light your Sheriff hath appeared after the Supersedere (?) is elapsed, for I think his Conduct has all along been suspicious.”

So much for the general atmosphere of the time. We come now to the occurrence of the vacancy and filling up of the Bishopric of Aberdeen, an event in which Bishop Alexander had of course to take a part.

“ Honest, worthy Bishop Gerard ” of that See, who had stood so loyally by Bishop Alexander in the matter of the Mandate for Ross in 1759 was now in a declining state. The journey from Aberdeen to Forfar in June, 1762, in connection with the Consecration of Bishop Forbes had been, as we saw, something of a strain upon him.

Writing in the previous Autumn, Bishop Alexander had said :—<sup>1</sup>

“ I had a Letter by yesterday's Post from Bonac. [*i.e.* Bp. Gerard] telling me that he cannot now keep our Meetings till after Easter, but, as we are mortal, and Delays are dangerous, and as we have the Affair [*i.e.* Bp. Forbes's Consecration] so favourably before us, I intend by to-morrow's Post to persuade him to take Chaise [instead of riding]. Providence will, I hope, take care of him.”

Writing on Feb. 3rd, 1763, Bishop Gerard had written of himself as :—

“ Long in a very distressed Condition ” and as suffering “ from a severe and extraordinary Cough . . . so that for three weeks past I was not able to attend in our Meetings, being able neither to stand or kneel . . . and that it has pleased my good God that my Ailments should turn into Gout in both my Legs.”

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ch.* 44.

On June 1st, 1764, the Rev. A. Petrie wrote to Bishop Alexander :—

“ Since the Receipt of yours on Sunday last I have been a Night at Aberdeen with the Bishop and heard him yesterday read a good part of the Prayers and preach a short Sermon very distinctly, and he seems to be in tolerable good Health ; but, after all, I think him but in a poor Way, his legs being much swelled, particularly the right leg, and his Faculties, I think, a good deal impaired or at least very languid at present.”

On April 4th, 1766, his hand-writing is extremely shaky and difficult to read. He survived, however, for another year, but was called away on Oct. 8th, 1767. Writing on Nov. 20th to his Uncle, Arthur Petrie said :—

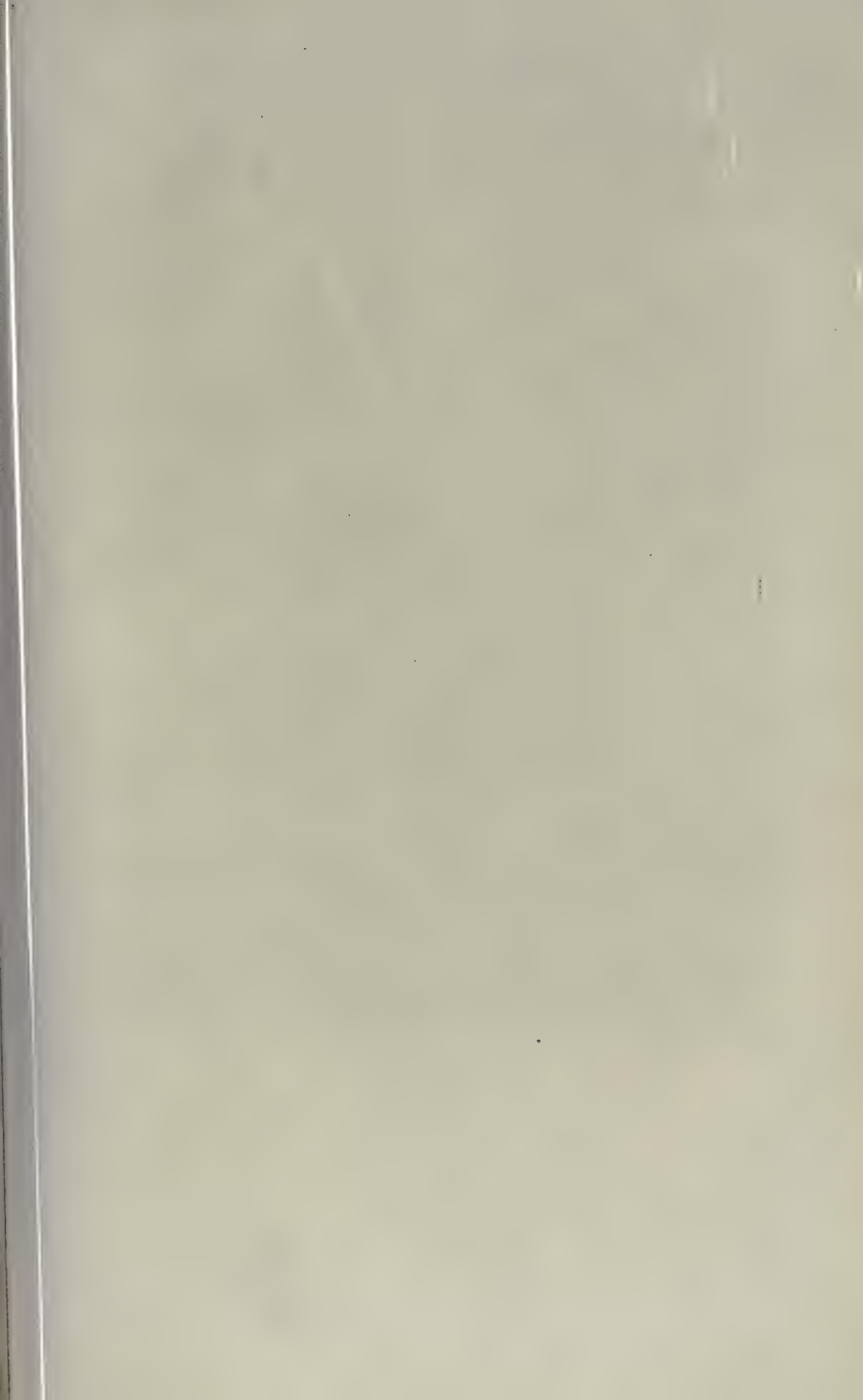
“ Mr. Innes has got the best silk Habit, the only thing so far as I could learn that he chose to accept of ; the other Silk Habit, which is very good, is allotted for the succeeding Bishop, when he shall have Occasion for it ; and the flannel gown, which was used for Winter, is to be given either to Mr. Morrice [of Auchindore] or Mr. Leith [of Huntly]. The whole Executry, the Books excepted, which are not yet disposed of, amounts to little more than £70 stg. and, indeed, I did not think it would have amounted to so much.”

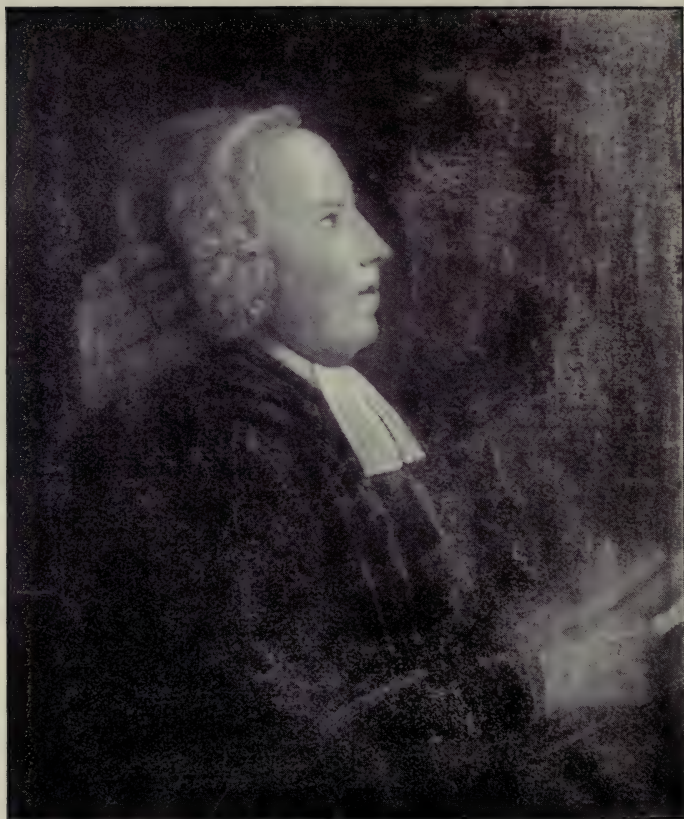
The appointment of a successor was not accomplished without some controversy, in which our Bishop became involved. The Rev. George Innes wrote to him saying that it was likely the Aberdeen Presbyters would prefer the bright, forceful Bishop Forbes to the Rev. R. Kilgour of Peterhead, “ because of the lowness of his spirits, which at times, it is said, distress him much,” and the Rev. A. Petrie wrote to him thus :—

“ I readily agreed to the Dean’s writing for a Mandate, though I am as much at a loss as ever to think who will be chosen. Mr. Smith was very modest upon the Point, and from the Conversation I had with him I could hardly learn to whom he would be inclined, though Mr. Innes says he would be for Mr. Kilgour. Mr. Innes himself, I found, would be for Bishop Forbes, and, I believe, so would several others. I modestly pointed out the Objection of Non-residence, and our Superiors probably inclining to have one added to their Number.”

Bishop Alexander’s reply, written on Dec. 5th, was to the following effect :—

“ I know you will act discreetly and impartially in the Affair of the Election and leave it entirely to yourselves. Indeed I am as much at a Loss how to advise, as you can be to act,





BISHOP KILGOUR.

for whatever my private Sentiments concerning Man may be, I would prefer Peace to everything, wi  
betraying the Cause of Truth."

A Mandate was duly granted, and on May 5th, 1768, the election took place, the result of which was that, as Mr. Innes had expected, Bishop Forbes was chosen by seven to four. The Rev. John Allan announced the fact to our Bishop, his uncle, and Dr. Abernethy wrote expressing his great satisfaction. Indeed the matter seemed to be so certain that Bishop Forbes himself was "ready to accept of Aberdeen without approval of his Episcopal brethren" and began an "interim inspection of the Diocese." But the rest of the Bishops, although they had agreed that a scattered country Diocese like Ross and Caithness could, under present circumstances, be quite well served by Bishop Forbes from Leith, decided that it would never do to have Aberdeen the very citadel of the Scottish Church, and including a great city in its bounds, ruled by a non-resident Bishop. They, therefore, used the power which was then fully recognised as belonging to them, and, quashing the election, ordered the Presbyters to proceed to a new one. The Rev. Robert Kilgour was then chosen by a fair majority, and was duly consecrated at Cupar-Fife on S. Matthew's day, 1768 by Bishops Falconar, Rait, and Alexander,<sup>1</sup> notwithstanding a protest by Bishop Forbes, who declined being present. After the Consecration, however, that Prelate's supporters wrote at his own earnest request to Bishop Kilgour, promising to receive and to submit to him.

The new Bishop had been :—

"Born at Waulkmill, Cruden, in 1714, and graduated at the University of Aberdeen in 1733. Thus as a stripling of three-and-twenty he began a Ministry [as Bishop Dunbar's assistant] in Peterhead; a ministry, which was destined to last for over half-a-century. . . . Mr. Kilgour took charge of a strong and united Congregation, and his Ministry was peaceably pursued without serious molestation until the tragic year of '45 . . . [Then] the Chappell of S. Peter was marked down for immediate destruction. . . . It was destroyed the 7th, 8th, and 9th days of May, 1746. The Managers were obliged to employ workmen in order to prevent its being set on fire. . . [By this time] Mr. Kilgour was single-handed, for Bishop Dunbar had died in January, 1746, and the young Priest was thrown entirely on his own resources. It is said he was of a timid disposition. There is no evidence of timidity at this juncture, nor afterwards, when he instituted and upheld a Nonjuring Clergyman at Lonmay. We should say he was cautious—the Scots

<sup>1</sup> *Lawson*, p. 326, and *T. Stephen*, p. 650, give three consecrating Bishops. Dr. Gammack asserts, however, that there were only Alexander and Rait.

word 'canny' expresses the idea better. . . . Mr. Kilgour performed divine service twelve or fourteen times on the Sunday at different houses. . . . It says something for the personality, influence, and resourcefulness of this 'timid' divine that under such depressing conditions Kilgour held his homeless flock together for twenty long and trying years."<sup>1</sup>

In 1767 a new Church was at length built and indeed it was high time, for "in 1769 when the population of Peterhead was 1518, the Episcopalians numbered 700."

Such was the new Bishop of Aberdeen and the future Consecrator of Bishop Seabury.

Considering the circumstances attending his appointment, we are not surprised to be told that :—

"A coolness sprang up between Forbes and his friend, Bishop Alexander, in consequence of the latter having assisted at Kilgour's consecration."

Perhaps we ought rather to say—"in consequence of the latter having concurred in the rejection of Forbes." It is satisfactory, however, to learn that :—

"Happily through the medium of Abernethy-Drummond, the difficulty was removed and the old friends reconciled."<sup>2</sup>

Before treating of the individual Congregations under the Bishop's jurisdiction separately, a certain change in a Diocesan appointment falls to be notified. By this time it was evident that the Synod Clerk, the Rev. Francis Crombie, was quite incapacitated for work by physical infirmity. At Forfar, therefore, the Synod, which met there on Aug. 16, 1768 :—

"Recommend to the Dean to call for the Presbytery Records<sup>3</sup> from Mr. Crombie, to be lodged with Mr. Lyall [of Kirriemuir], who is appointed to act as their Clerk from henceforward."

It was at this juncture that Dean Hill and the new Synod Clerk were at last able to give effect to the finding of the Meeting of 1764, which Mr. Crombie had evidently been too feeble to carry out, and to copy into the *Register* all the records, which were forthcoming to fill the blank between the Synods of 1744 and 1764. Unfortunately Mr. Crombie does not seem to have handed over to them any more documents than the Bishop's valuable list of Ordinations.

We come now to such memorials of the various Congregations in the Diocese as remain for this period :—

<sup>1</sup> *Wilkinson*, pp. 71 to 82.

<sup>2</sup> See *C's Bp. F.*, pp. 40-45

<sup>3</sup> Called *The Dunkeld Register* in these pages.

(1) *Alloa*. We hear nothing about the actual Congregation of which the Bishop was Pastor, but there is information, some in connection with his Episcopal work and some concerning his more private and domestic affairs.

First, therefore, for his recorded Episcopal acts. During our present period there were three Ordinations held by him in his Chapel. Two of these were performed at the same time :—

“ Mr. William Nicoll at Forfar and Mr. John Allan were ordained Deacons on S. Andrews’ day, 1767, at Alloa by Bishop Alexander in his Chapel there ”

in the presence of certain witnesses who will be noticed later.

Certain passages in his letters throw light on these Ordinations. On Feb. 7th, 1767, he wrote to Arthur Petrie that originally there had been a design, according to which John Allan, who, it will be remembered was his nephew, was to have been ordained as successor to Bishop Edgar<sup>1</sup> in the pastoral charge at Arbroath ; but, that scheme having failed, he agreed to go as Dr. Abernethy’s assistant in the Carrubbers’ Close<sup>2</sup> Chapel in Edinburgh. Again on Dec. 5th, he wrote as follows :—

“ Your letter of the 18th November reached me on S. Andrew’s Eve, when the Brethren were met with me, who came to assist on his Festival, when John Allan and William Nicol, nephew to Mr. [*i.e.* Dean] Hill, who came with him, were ordained Deacons by me ; Mr. Rose was the other Clergyman, Mr. Cheyne was taken ill of a cold and could not attend. John Adie and Peter Sangster came out. Allan went off [to Edinburgh] on Wednesday, armed with his Diploma [of Ordination, which is still in the Theological College there in 1915] and Letters to the Primus [Falconar] and the Doctor [Abernethy]. How he has been received by them, or how he may please, I do not know. *Bene vertat Deus !* ”

The Bishop was evidently much delighted with John Allan’s appointment, following upon that of his brother, Alexander, as assistant to Bishop Rait in Dundee at Whitsunday, 1765, for he exclaimed :—“ Are not these two brothers lucky rogues ? ”

The third Ordination at Alloa is thus entered in the *Dunkeld Register* :—

“ Mr. Patrick Rose in Inchbrakie was ordained Deacon on Ascension Day, 1768, at Alloa, before “ certain witnesses.”

<sup>1</sup> This Bishop died Aug. 27, 1765, aged 67.—*Scotich.* 294.

<sup>2</sup> In 1746. There were two Chapels in this Close.—*Jacobite Stronghold*, p. 63.

No information concerning this Candidate is forthcoming. Inchbrakie is in the Crieff neighbourhood. Possibly the presence of Mr. Rose of Doune at the Ordination is a token that there was a relationship between him and the ordinand. The two facts that the new Deacon's name never reappears in the *Dunkeld Register*, and that a Clergyman of the Edinburgh Diocese, *i.e.* Mr. George Chein of Stirling, was present at the laying on of hands, lead us to conjecture that, like Mr. Allan, Mr. Patrick Rose was ordained by Bishop Alexander for Edinburgh during the unfortunate vacancy of the See.

We may here describe a Confirmation administered by our Bishop, although it was extra-diocesan. The candidate was the Mother of Bishop Forbes, and her son thus relates the event :—<sup>1</sup>

"In 1742, when among my friends in the north, I did all I could to persuade my Mother to come over to the Communion of the Church ; hardened custom being stiff against advice and deaf to all argument. Besides, her [second] husband was rivetted in the Schism and thereby a change was an herculean labour and insurmountable difficulty. Now (1763) that she is a widow and her own mistress, perhaps she may be prevailed upon to think of a change from worse to better, and, though in the evening of life with her, what an inexpressible pleasure it would give me to have that happily brought about."

A few years later his great desire was fulfilled, for in 1766 the old lady was confirmed by Bishop Alexander, then on a visit to his nephew, Arthur Petrie, at Meiklefolla.

About this time also the Bishop was interested in the distribution of sound and useful Church literature, and had evidently entrusted Mr. Skene with some commission in connection with it, for the latter wrote thus to him,<sup>2</sup> May 20th, 1770 :—

"I long looked for a proper occasion to convey the *Catechisms* and *Rebuffer* for Mr. Innes [of Perth], but none occurred. I was intending to forward them about the Circuit, but Mr. Nicol has undertaken the Conveyance, as he has frequent Opportunities to Perth from Blacklunans."

It seems probable that the first of the publications here mentioned was his friend, Bishop Forbes's "Catechism dealing chiefly with the Holy Eucharist,"<sup>3</sup> which would be required for the instruction of Confirmation candidates. *The Rebuffer* (Mr. Skene's copy of which is now in Perth Cathedral Library) was

<sup>1</sup> Bp. F. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Dill. 28, Forfar MS.

<sup>3</sup> Reprinted through the Scottish Clerical Society by Bishop Dowden in 1904 (Grant & Sons, Edin.).

Dr. Abernethy's *The Rebuffer Rebuffed*, a pamphlet published in 1770, as a vindication of the position of the Scottish Bishops.<sup>1</sup>

We now turn to the Bishop's more domestic affairs. Although he was a bachelor, he did not find in that state of life a tranquil refuge from household worries. Early in 1766 Arthur Petrie was contemplating marriage, and wrote to ask his uncle's advice on the subject. The Bishop's reply on Feb. 14th was to the following effect :—

“As to the Matrimonial Design, I have had too much Experience of the Inconvenience of being managed by Servants myself to disapprove of it [*i.e.* Marriage] in you.”

However, by Dec. 19th, he had occasion to write to Arthur :—

“I am sorry for the miscarriage of your Matrimonial Plot.”

Ultimately the nephew followed his uncle's example and remained single, but it does not appear whether by so doing he succeeded in escaping domestic worries better than the Bishop did.

On Feb. 7th, 1767, the latter informed his nephew that :—

“Since my last I have purchased a House at £240, and, before it be in order, will perhaps stand £40 more. I have had a most miserable life with Smoke this Winter, my Landlord impertinent, the Neighbourhood disagreeable, and where I go there are no near Neighbours, the air is good, a large Garden, a new House. . . . It will employ me most of the ensuing Summer to get it set to Rights, and you may easily conceive I will be drained.”

With regard to his health, he said on Feb. 10th, 1766 :—

“The Winter, though open, has been intensely cold with hoar-frosts and reams, which have made it unhealthy and Colds and Coughs prevail much. I have not been free of them for a long time, though, *Deo Gratias*, now much better than for some weeks past.”

<sup>1</sup> Note.—The Rev. Norman Sievwright, a young Aberdeenshire man, had been ordained by an English Bishop, and had set up as a *Qualified* Clergyman in Brechin, trying to draw away the Rev. D——'s congregation from him there. He had published what he called a *Preservative against Innovations in Religion and Politics*, in which he called in question the very validity of the Scottish Bishops' Orders. This at once drew out a very vigorous anonymous *Letter* from Dean Skinner of Linshart, vindicating the impugned Episcopal Consecrations. Then in 1769 came *Remarks* by Dr. Abernethy, a pamphlet also published anonymously, in which he supported the northern Dean. Mr. Sievwright replied by defending his original publication in a pamphlet called *A Rebuff*, and Dr. Abernethy returned to the charge in *The Rebuffer Rebuffed*. The Dean's and the Doctor's pages contain a very able and full vindication of the Scottish Consecrations during the impugned period of the College and Diocesan controversies of 1720-1731. Other publications of Dr. Abernethy about this time were :—*Remarks upon Dr. Campbell's Sermon*, 1761 ; *A Letter to a Lady on Church Unity*, 1768 ; *The Lawfulness of breaking Faith with Heretics*, 1778.

(2) *Athol*. From the fact that the Rev. Walter Stewart was Pastor of this congregation till his death, which did not occur till a later time, we know that he was Presbyterian here during the present period.

(3) *Blacklunans*. We have already seen that at the Synod, held in Forfar on Aug. 16th, 1768, the growing infirmities of the Rev. Francis Crombie were so manifest that he was induced to hand over the Synod Clerkship to a successor. The following extract from the Minutes<sup>1</sup> of that meeting shows what was also done for his pastoral charge :—

“ Having taken into consideration the State of the Church in this Corner, [they] are of opinion that in regard to the weak state of Mr. Crombie’s health, it would be necessary to establish an Assistant for him in his charge of Meigle and the Congregation of Blacklunans, [and] do therefore recommend to the Dean, Mr. Hill, to deal with the Gentlemen and People belonging to the said Congregations to that effect, and to try what Fund can be raised among them for a subsistence to a Helper to Mr. Crombie, and are of opinion that Mr. Nicoll would be a proper person for that purpose.”

Mr. Nicoll was accordingly appointed, and, while assisting Mr. Crombie at Meigle, no doubt took the highland district of Blacklunans entirely off his hands. But he had not long been settled, when an attempt was made to remove him to another charge. For on May 4th, 1769, the Bishop of Aberdeen [Kilgour] wrote to the Rev. Arthur Petrie at Meiklefolla thus :—

“ If you have not already [*i.e.* done so] I would be glad you [would] write Bishop Alexander to see if he would consent to let Mr. Nicol come to Lonmay . . . Though there be some discouraging circumstances, yet there are some particular encouragements, Mr. Jaffrey’s books, besides a legacy of £50 stg. and which is more, the Congregation seems willing to accept and support a Clergyman, though he should find it necessary to confine himself to the number 4.”

Mr. Skene, however, to whom the northern Bishop also applied, but who evidently retained a personal interest in what had been his first charge would not hear of the proposal. Writing to Mr. Petrie on July 1st, he informed him that he had seen Mr. Nicol :—

“ Who absolutely refuses any such Overture and [declares] that nothing less than Episcopal Authority would make him accept of it. I was truly glad to find him of that Mind, and, had he been otherwise, I would have done all in my power to oppose it for Reasons I laid before your Uncle.

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

It would in the first Place have rendered the Bishop odious to the Highland Gentry [of Blacklunans], who are worthy but kittle Company (O well do I know them!) as he had not only passed his word for Mr. Nicol, but also it would, if not utterly ruined, have rendered Mr. Crombie's Congregation [at Meigle] less steady, as they are assured Mr. Nicoll not only is to succeed but supply him with Assistance at any Time, when needful, and of whom they have all conceived a very great Favour. And moreover, I am far from thinking Mr. Nicol the proper Person for that Cure [Lonmay], as he is of no Address but even awkward to a very great Degree. His Modesty, indeed, will, I hope, in Time overbalance that, but Time it must take."

A year later, *i.e.* in May, 1770, Mr. Nicol had some Candidates for Confirmation to present to the Bishop, and Mr. Skene tells us<sup>1</sup> that he proposed that they should attend along with his Uncle's [*i.e.* Dean Hill at Blairgowrie], if he has any." As we have already seen, he undertook in the same month the conveyance of copies of Bishop Forbes's *Catechism* and Dr. Abernethy's *Rebuffer Rebuffed* "about the Circuit."

(4) *Blairgowrie*. As has been already stated, Dean Hill's *Session Book* has no further entries after 1762. However it is evident that he still pursued his Ministry as before. We have seen that Mr. Nicoll was his nephew, and he was present at his Ordination in the Bishop's Chapel at Alloa on S. Andrew's day, 1767. He is described in the entry as being "at Gourdie," which is familiar to us as one of the Blairgowrie names.

From a letter written by Mr. Skene to the Bishop on Jan. 27th, 1770, we learn that Mr. Hill's Congregation was deprived by death of one of its chief pillars, *i.e.* Mr. James Rattray, the Bishop's son and successor:—

"Craighall's death you would see in the Newspapers. I hear it was very sudden. He took his Supper as usual, but at Bed Time, when going to Rest, complained there was Smoak in the Room, to which his Servant replied that there was none; but he perceived him trembling and shaking; he desired to call his Son, and in a few Minutes expired. *Anima quiescat in pace!*"

(5) *Forfar*. There is the record of the most encouraging progress in Mr. Skene's Congregation during this period.

According to our alphabetical method of arrangement the account of Mr. Nicol's settlement at Blacklunans has already been given, but at the date of his Ordination (Nov. 30, 1767) Bishop Alexander wrote:—

<sup>1</sup> Dill, 28-9.

“Nicol, a very modest young man, is to assist Mr. Skene.” and he did so for some nine months, before being moved to Mr. Crombie’s assistance.

It was in Forfar that the Diocesan Synod of Aug. 16th, 1768, met, but, since the business transacted at it has already been described in its own proper connection, it is not necessary to delay longer over it here.

It was also from Forfar that on May 4th, 1769, Mr. Skene wrote the letter against the proposed removal of Mr. Nicol to Lonmay, which has already been given.

At the very beginning of January, 1770, Mr. Skene was laid aside with a sharp attack of rheumatic fever and had to fall back on the help of Mr. Nicol and Mr. Allan, who fortunately happened to be in the district enjoying their New Year holidays. Before long, however, he was able to be about again<sup>1</sup> and to press on a great work, which the increase in the Congregation had by this time rendered necessary. The old Meeting-House at 131 High Street, which they had begun to occupy after the closing of their Chapel in 1746, and which served their purpose tolerably, as long as the penal laws were rigorously enforced, would no longer suffice, and a new Chapel was already approaching completion. On Feb. 27th, 1770, Mr. Skene wrote to the Bishop:—

“On Sunday, the 11th March, I intend taking Possession of the new Chappel. All the Seats in the old one are removed.”

In April, the good Presbyter addressed the following triumphant epistle to the Bishop:—

“Right Rev. Father, Yours of the 5th ulto. came in time to make me easier and much satisfied, as it brought me your Approbation. We have great Satisfaction in our new Chapel, it has turned out to be a decent, nay elegant House for Christian Worship, and, what adds mightily to my Satisfaction and happiness, is that we have got all our principal folks well pleased in seats without any noise or disturbance. I did fear it might have been otherwise, and indeed I took the opportunity in the conclusion of my Discourse the first day we entered it, to harangue my good folks and pointed out, as well as I could, the consequences of Discord. I owne it was not lost, and it has endeared me much to them. Thanks be to God for all his Mercies and to him be all the Glory and Praise.

Good Lady Mary [of Glamis] has erected a handsome Seat, which graces our Chapel, is covered with a fine green Freeze, Back and Breast studded with brass tacks and stuffed in the Bottom, which is also covered with the same,

<sup>1</sup> On May 20th, however, he was laid aside by a fit of Asthma.



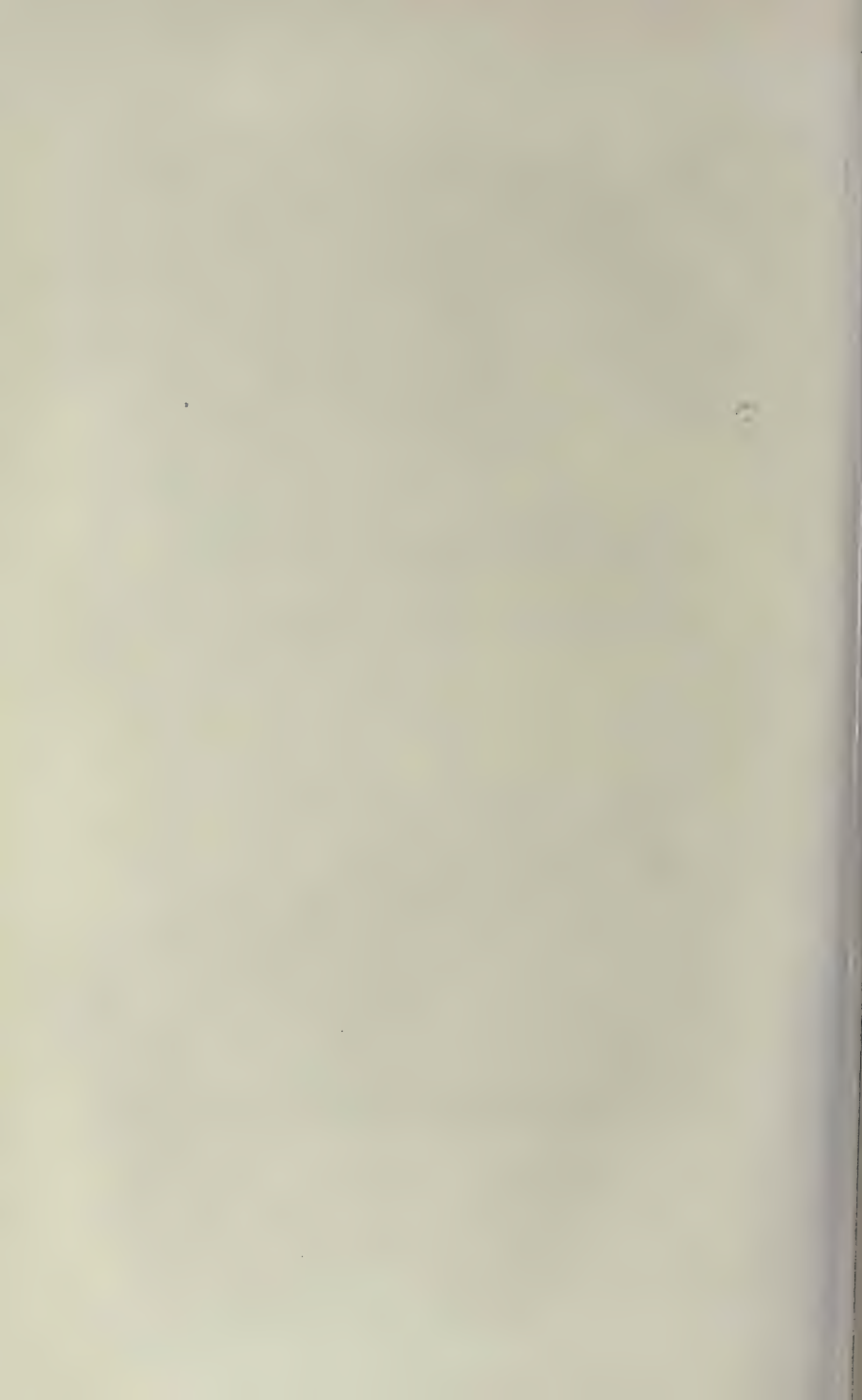
The Meeting House at 131 High Street, Forfar.



Mr. Skene's New Chapel, 1770.

*(As at beginning of 20th Century).*

*[From Dill's "Episcopacy in Forfar."]*



with kneeling board, and caused write my Trustees that she was to pay a guinea a year for her Seat—The House-keeper, a very discreet Woman and her own Woman have possessed it and the Bridgeton folks.

I'm persuaded you'll be pleased with everything about it, and, if it can entertain you, I shall send the Plan enclosed in my next. We have got a handsome Pulpit with an elegant head and sounding board and a reading Pew covered with green and studded. A large Altar in the east end, and before an 8 ft. high, by 4 ft. broad, Window. Our House is so crowded that we must soon erect Galleries, with a view of which corbals were fixed in the Walls, proper for that purpose. We could just now set 50 or 60 seats more than we have got room for.

Your good acquaintance Mrs. Erskine was with me lately, and begs to be remembered to you. She is in raptures with our Chapel.

I am very happy with the Thoughts of seeing you here in Summer, when I daresay you will be pleased with my doings. I have near finished a very snugg house for myself, and Family, near the Chapel. I shall be happy to see you in both. I'll have much to do on the approaching great Festival. I beg your Prayers for God's assistance. I shall acquaint you of my numbers when it is over. Elizabeth joins me in our most respectful good Wishes, and begging your Benediction for my Congregation, Wife, and Children and Self.

I am, Right Rev. Father in God,

Your dutiful and aff. Son and

most obedient humble Servant,

GEORGE SKENE."

As for the "numbers," no fewer than 256 people received the Holy Communion in the new Chapel at Easter, besides a good many who were necessarily detained.

And this was followed by a most encouraging Confirmation. There was some doubt, indeed, as to whether the Bishop would be able to take the service himself, and on May 20th, Mr. Skene wrote to him as follows :—

"Dear Sir, Would not a Chaise be much easier for you? I'm sure it would, if you move at Leisure. You have no Occasion to go much off the High-way, as those, who want the benefit of Confirmation can easily be appointed to meet you at places convenient. I beg you would not think of adventuring on Horseback. I remember how unhappy you was with your Horse, when last here, and how

hard it was for you to mount and dismount. There is no place you would chuse to visit but there is no (*sic*) good access to with a wheel Machine, and I am also persuaded the odds of the Expense will be very inconsiderable, and, if it should be so, you can make the shorter stay in every Corner. It is on your account that I offer this advice. I beg you will think of it."

The Bishop clung to the idea of coming in his own person, if possible, and on June 8th, Mr. Skene again wrote to him:—

"In hopes, however, that we have the pleasure and happiness of seeing you, as I'll have some few to be confirmed, I beg to know, as soon as you come to a determined Resolution, that I may have them in Readiness upon Call."

The *Forfar Register* does not indeed record the name of the Bishop, who actually officiated at the Confirmation, but that would hardly have been the case, unless it had been the Bishop of the Diocese himself, and it must have given the old man much gratification to do so, for there were as many as 54 candidates.

By the beginning of summer, "the snugg Parsonage" was ready for occupation, and on June 8th, Mr. Skene wrote to the Bishop:—

"We are just got into our new Dwelling, and indeed are lodged far better than we deserve, and are still busy now and then placing Things properly."

The family which made this change, consisted of Mr. Skene, Mrs. Skene, and four children:—*i.e.* George Alexander, aged 6; Elizabeth, aged 4; James, aged 2; and John, an infant of six months. The first of these had been baptised, as we have seen, by Dean Hill. The three younger ones by the Rev. J. Lyall of Kirriemuir respectively on May 16th, 1766; Jan. 25th, 1768; and Dec. 16th, 1769.

(6) *Glamis*. We have just seen that Lady Mary erected a seat for herself in the new Chapel at Forfar, and must therefore have been in the habit of worshipping there. Nevertheless the following extracts from letters addressed by Mr. Skene to the Bishop convey the impression that he used to give occasional ministrations at Glamis:—

"*Feb. 27th, 1770.* To have your Approbation is the chief Cause of giving you this Scribble, which Favour I beg. Tomorrow I set out early for Forfar. . . . On Sunday first I am (God willing) to be with Lady Mary [*i.e.* at the Castle], when she proposes to receive the Holy Sacrament."

"*Sept. 6, 1770.* The Earl of Strathmore . . . with his Lady and Lady Maria arrived to dinner on the Monday after we left Glammis. I hear frequently from good Lady Mary Lyon, who continues well."

(7) *Kirriemuir*. At the Diocesan Synod held on Aug. 16th, 1768, it was the Rev. James Lyall of Kirriemuir who was appointed Synod Clerk in place of Mr. Crombie resigned.

It will be observed that the two Incumbencies of Kirriemuir and Cortachy, or rather the three, Kirriemuir, Cortachy, and Memus, are now merged in one, and the charge is henceforth Kirriemuir and Cortachy. Other charges, such as Meigle and Blacklunans, Forfar and Carsebank, were similarly joined about this time.

(8) *Meigle*. Under the head of *Blacklunans* we have related how, owing to the frail state of Mr. Crombie's health, Mr. Nicol was appointed to relieve him of that more highland part of his charge, and also to be his assistant and successor at Meigle itself.

On July 7th, 1770, the Dean had startling news for the Bishop. He wrote :—

“I write this to acquaint you that yesterday I was called upon to perform the last Duty to my good Friend and Brother, Mr. Crombie, who died suddenly on Wednesday afternoon on the Road 'twixt Coupar [Angus] and Dunsinnan. He dined at Coupar that day, and set out on a visit to Sir William Nairn. A Man set out along with him, but he obliged him to return before he travelled a mile. It is probable he had been seized with a fit of his old Distress on the Road, for some Strangers, going towards Coupar, observed him lying at a little Distance from the Road, and, on sending their Servant to see what was the matter with him, found him quite Dead. . . . He is to be laid in Mr. Crokatt's grave on Monday. I promised to supply the Congregation on Sunday, the 15th curt., and get some of my Brethren for the following Sundays. I find by Sir James Kinloch and some others of the Hearers that they incline to have my Nephew for their Pastor, but they will take no steps without your Direction.”

At a meeting held at Forfar, on Aug. 29th, it was reported<sup>1</sup> that :—

“The Rev. Wil. Nicol at Blacklunans was upon Application to the Ordinary collated to the charge on Aug. 12th, 1770.”

Thereupon he removed his residence from the Blacklunans district and settled at Fullarton, just beyond Meigle at the Glamis Road, where his predecessor had lived.

(9) *Perth*. Beyond the fact that the Rev. George Innes continued to minister here all through the present period, the affairs of this congregation remain unchronicled.

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

As for the "Qualified" people, their Pastor, the Rev. John Cameron, left for America in 1770, and was succeeded by the Rev. Adam Peebles.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing exhausts our knowledge of the Diocese of Dunkeld, and we now come to that of Dunblane :—

(10) *Doune*. The only evidence we have of the continued existence of this congregation at this time is that "the Rev. Charles Rose at Down" is mentioned both in the Dunkeld Register and in a letter of Bishop Alexander, dated Dec. 3rd, 1767, as having been one of the assisting Presbyters at the Ordination of Messrs. Nicol and Allan at Alloa on S. Andrews day of that year. We also know that he was still there at a later period than that embraced in this chapter.

(11) *Muthill*. Just as Forfar was the most vigorous charge in Dunkeld, so Muthill was undoubtedly the strongest in Dunblane. The Rev. William Erskine was still Pastor, and the Congregation was worshipping in the old Meeting-House, which, having been destroyed in 1746, had been subsequently rebuilt.<sup>2</sup> The Baptisms for the five years 1766 to 1770, were as follows—25, 15, 18, 21, 15.—Total, 94.

(12) *Souterton*. On Feb. 10th, 1766, the Bishop wrote thus :—

"Mr. John Graeme is dead since I last wrote, and I doubt there will be no room for a successor to him,"

and it does not appear that one was ever appointed.

It must have been with mixed feelings that our Bishop, now (1770) seventy-six years of age, contemplated the state of his Diocese. On the one hand, to realise that of the 13 charges, which were all that remained to him compared with the 22, which had been his before the '45, already Memus had been merged in Kirriemuir, Carsebank in Forfar, Blacklunans in Meigle, and that Dunkeld, Nairne, and Souterton had become extinct, leaving him (besides Alloa) only these seven *i.e.* Blairgowrie, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Meigle, Perth, Muthill, and Doune—to realise that and to reflect that the penal laws were still on the statute book must have been a severe trial to his faith. On the other hand, he must have derived no little comfort from the general consideration that the hostile legislation had not been actively enforced for ten years, and from such a particular fact as the revival of the Forfar Congregation and the building of its fine new Chapel under the ministry of the Rev. G. Skene !

<sup>1</sup> S. John's Church MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd 28.

## CHAPTER XIX.

1771-1776.—*Declining Days—The End.*

That cheering Confirmation of 54 Candidates, in what would appear to him the beautiful new Church at Forfar, was amongst the last of his Episcopal activities. After this there was left only the evening of his days.

He must indeed have sanctioned the Synodical Meeting, held in Forfar in May 29th, 1771, and the Presbyters there assembled "drew up a Petition and Application to their Ordinary," but we note that he was not present. He was also still taking an interest in intellectual matters, for on Oct. 7th, 1771, he wrote :—

"If the Principles Dr. Campbell has advanced in his late infamous Sermon take Footing (as they are but too well adapted to the Tast of this licentious Age) I'm afraid we may soon have neither Church nor Christianity to contend for."

He confessed, however, that his health was not what he wished it to be. The previous winter had tried him pretty severely. On Feb. 7th, 1771, he informed Arthur Petrie that :—

"The Weather has been exceedingly severe and stormy. Floods of Rain, Hail, Winds, Frosts, and deep Snow, and I have had several severe Colds, but the Weather is now turned mild and I am pretty well at writing of this. As I have sympathy with my suffering Friends, I enclose a small Note more to Harry Reid, whose Stock lies most in Sheep and Cattle, to enable him to get them preserved in that bleak and barren soil, which I can imagine is now quite swallowed up in Snow."

And in April, after Easter, he continued :—

"I flattered myself prematurely of being rid of my Cough. It is still a Stick-fast, and I cannot expect will quite remove till the Weather, which has been most intensely cold with Frosts and Snows, turn in more mild and temperate."

Gradually he became less and less able to discharge his active duties, and, first, Bishop Raitt<sup>1</sup> was obliged to relieve him of the Forfar Confirmations in 1773 and 1774 ; then his business man in Edinburgh, Mr. Callendar, saw necessary to write thus to him in June 29th, 1775 :—

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Raitt is said to have been a noted 'extempore' preacher, even to old age, and to have had a very dignified manner.—*T.S.* p. 287.

"I regret very much the tender state of your Health, which must render the Management of your affairs troublesome to you. On that account, I think you should grant a Factory to your Nephew, Mr. Petrie, to act for you."

And Mr. Skene was moved to address the following exhortation to him on March 9th, of the same year :—

"I am persuaded you will not doubt my real Regard for your Welfare, nor can I help expressing my Anxiety about your present Situation. I think you are too much confined and in too great a Measure deprived of the free Air, which infallibly must be a considerable Loss to your Health, as your Strength does not allow you to take that Exercise which is necessary. For which Reason, and if my Judgment have any weight with you, I should think your going to Aberdeenshire and residing with your Nephew might contribute a great deal to the lengthening of your Days and even make them glide more smoothly on than in being cooped up in a Town, situate in a Country continually cap'd with a Cloud of Coal-Smoak; and what still, I'm persuaded, should be no small Inducement to you, the certain Prospect of sleeping in your worthy Father's Grave at the conclusion of this mortal Life."

But, even before Mr. Skene could write this quaintly affectionate and touching appeal to his old Bishop, official notice had been publicly taken of his failing powers. A plan was devised, which, though evidently prompted by kindly feeling towards himself, meant that there was nothing left for the veteran but to retire from the fighting line. It was so arranged that the Bishop was enabled to retain his See, but was at the same time relieved of all responsibility for it. It will be remembered that while he was full Diocesan of Dunkeld, he only administered Dunblane in the vacancy of that See. It was therefore resolved that a Bishop should be consecrated and collated to Dunblane, with the tacit understanding that he should give his services as Coadjutor in Dunkeld, during what must be the short remainder of Bishop Alexander's life.

Accordingly in the summer of 1774, Bishop Falconar, the Primus, issued a Mandate<sup>1</sup> for Dunblane, which had had no Bishop of its own since the resignation of Bishop White in 1743, and the result was that the two Clergy remaining in the Diocese, *i.e.* our old friends the Rev. Wm. Erskine of Muthil and the Rev. Charles Rose of Doune, sent in the name of the latter, and on S. Bartholomew's day, Aug. 24th, 1774, he was consecrated at Forfar, doubtless in the new Chapel, by Bishops Falconar, Raitt, and Forbes.

<sup>1</sup> T. S., 389.

Inasmuch as the new Prelate was one of Bishop Alexander's own Clergy, and we have already given all the information at our disposal concerning him in former chapters under the heading of *Doune*, it is not necessary for us to pause, as we have done at former Consecrations, and provide a biographical notice of the new Bishop. Suffice it to say that although Bishop Rose, while being a competently able and extremely zealous Churchman, was in no way supereminent for his talents, he yet in the future won a very distinct place for himself in the Scottish Episcopate as the forlorn hope of the extremest Jacobites.<sup>1</sup>

Having thus considered the Bishop, let us, before recounting the end, once more make the round of his Diocese, collecting whatever fragments of information, thanks to his habit of keeping his letters, remain :—

(1) *Alloa*. Beginning, as usual, with Alloa, we find the Bishop's strength failing in his pastoral, as we have already seen it doing so in his Episcopal work.

At the beginning of the period, indeed, we still find him actively at his post. On April 30th, 1771, he wrote as follows :—

“ My numbers at the late Festival [*i.e.* Easter] were rather more than ordinary, occasioned by severals from Dunfermline,”

and again :—

“ I could not find Leisure for writing till the Solemnities of the late Festival were over, which, all Glory be to God they now happily are,”

and we see him once more active on Oct. 7th, when he wrote that he was anxious to see one of Harry Reid's many children educated for the Ministry, and declaring his readiness to give help for that purpose, added :—“ We have need to bestir ourselves in the Church's support.”

But he confessed after Easter that he got through the Festival “ not without a good deal of Pain and Fatigue ” and gradually he became less and less able to look after his people. Towards the end of the year, therefore, he devised the scheme of bringing Arthur Petrie from Meiklefolla to be assistant and successor to himself at Alloa. Mr. Petrie accordingly wrote thus to him on Jan. 2nd, 1772 :—

“ I look upon your Offer as extremely generous, and as to the Emoluments which may be expected otherwise from the Congregation, I have no manner of Fear. . . . Therefore I am willing to accept of your Offer, and either assist you in your Life-time, or take the charge of the Congregation

<sup>1</sup> For which see *Bishop Watson*, chapters II. to X.

after your Death, if it shall please God to spare me, provided the Congregation with which I am now concerned can be supplied and Bishop Kilgour will dispense with me."

Owing to a succession of snow-storms, it was not till March 30th that Mr. Petrie could discover and communicate his Diocesan's decision to his uncle, but he then wrote:—

"I shall transcribe a Paragraph of his Letter to me, brought about eight days after I had been with him by Mr. Cruickshank, a young man now in Deacon's Orders. It was as follows:—'To come now to your own matter, I need not repeat particularly what I said to you when here. Though it gives me great Uneasiness to think of parting with you, yet I know not how to deny your worthy Uncle. He has a particular Claim on your services. I doubt not it was particularly owing to him that the Church enjoys the Benefit of your Labours.'"

For some reason or other, however, Mr. Petrie never settled in Alloa, as Bishop Alexander's assistant in the pastoral charge there. But Bishop Rose, somewhat more than a year after his Consecration, *i.e.* in November, 1775, paid a visit to the old man in Alloa for the purpose of taking steps to relieve him of the burden of the congregational work. Accordingly the Rev. John Allan,<sup>1</sup> our Bishop's nephew, came over from Edinburgh, where he was now settled, and examined a young Candidate, Mr. Alexander Cruickshank, with the result that he reported him to Bishop Rose as qualified for Ordination, who ordained him in Alloa Chapel on S. Andrew's day (Nov. 30th). As evidenced by the fact that Mr. Cruickshank began on the very next day to keep the Registers and accounts of the congregation, it is clear that the time of his aged Chief's activities was already over.

(2) *Athole*. Coming now to Athole we find the following notice entered in the *Dunkeld Register* at this point:—

"The Rev. Mr. Walter Stewart was ordained Deacon by Bishop George Haliburton of Aberdeen at Denhead, 16th Feb., 1711, and promoted to the Presbyterate by the said Bishop of Aberdeen at Denhead on the 11th day of March, 1712. He was thereafter three years officiating in the Meeting House of Perth<sup>2</sup> and at Auchterarder; ten years at Down in Menteith, and ever since in Athole."

<sup>1</sup> On Sept. 16th, 1769, John Allan was working as a Deacon in Dundee and looking forward to being ordained Priest. His brother, Alexander, had also been in Dundee since 1765 as assistant to Bishop Raitt. "Sandie," as his friends called him, received a legacy about this time in the shape of a "New Habit and Bands" from the late Rev. Samuel Thorne, who had succeeded the Rev. A. Livingstone at Dunfermline. A companion's remark upon this was:—"Has he not been a lucky Spark?" Both Brothers went to Edinburgh, where they are mentioned between 1781-92.—*S.M.M.*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ep. Hist. Perth*, Ch. VIII.

At first sight it seemed puzzling why this information from ancient history should be inserted here *apropos* of nothing. For a while the present writer thought that the fragment had been interpolated, simply because it had been found on a loose sheet amongst either Mr. Crombie's or Dean Hill's papers after their deaths; but, when it was discovered that a vacancy at once occurred in Athol, the truth was seen to be that the clerk intended the entry as an *obituary notice* of Mr. Stewart, and being very conscious of that Presbyter's death himself, did not observe that he had failed to give written expression to that which was so clear to his thought. But those four words, "ever since in Athole" are the record of an all but fifty years' ministry there, now (*i.e.* sometime in 1773) brought to an end!

The vacancy was soon supplied. The Rev. James Taylor informed the Bishop on Nov. 5th, 1773, that, while at Blairgowrie:

"After I saw that I was the nearest Clergyman to the Athol Congregation, I determined to give them a day. So I went up Sunday before last, where, notwithstanding the bad day and their not being all advertised, there was a very genteel Company; but, alas! the Duke of Athole is making great havoc there [*i.e.* of the Nonjuring interest] about the [Parliamentary] Election. I have here sent you some Gentlemen's names, to whom I earnestly entreat that you would write, whenever you receive this. P.S. Mr. Stewart, Ballekin, Esq.; Mr. Stewart, Findoynet, Esq.; Mr. Robertson, Fasklie, Esq.; Mr. Robertson, Lude, Esq.; Mr. Robertson, Bohallie, Esq.; Mr. Stewart, Kynallhan, Esq.; Mr. Balneavis, Ednadower. N.B.—I am to be there 24th Sunday after Trinity.

On Nov. 25th, he wrote to the Bishop, as follows:—

"God only knows how the attempt may succeed, as it meets with great opposition from the Qualified Gentleman, but I hope it will be carried through notwithstanding all their opposition by the zeal of a few, among whom the young Laird of Crossmount in Rannoch has distinguished himself by his Activity in that Country, although it be near twenty miles from the place of Worship, so that his zeal is very much to be commended. P.S.—I am to be there again on the 3rd Sunday in Advent.

On Dec. 18th, Mr. Skene wrote:—

"I had this week a Visit of your Deacon, Mr. Taylor; he has met with great Encouragement from the Atholl People and begs you would write Mr. Robertson of Lude and Mr. Robertson of Faskally."

Writing from Orchill on Jan. 27th, 1774, the representatives of "the late worthy Mr. Stewart's Congregation" express their

most devout satisfaction that Mr. Taylor has come among them, but beg the Bishop to put him into Priest's Orders :—

“ We beseech you to consider the Cease (case) of a great many old People, who, if this be not done, must of necessity die without having the Sacrament administered to them, which to us appears very terable.”

Unlike his predecessor, who did not attend Diocesan meetings, Mr. Taylor did so. On July 17th, 1776, he signed his name in the Diocesan Register as “ James Taylor, Stormont and Athole.”

(3) *Blairgowrie*. On June 12th, 1773, the Rev. G. Skene had sad news for the Bishop from the Blairgowrie Congregation.

Ever since Bishop Rattray died in 1743 his son and family at Craighall continued (as we have seen) to be pillars of the Church. It has already been related how Mr. James Rattray had been gathered to his fathers in Jan., 1770, and been succeeded in turn by his son, but now what Mr. Skene had to say was as follows :—

“ Alas, last Night I was informed that Craighall, poor unhappy Lade was at the point of Death in a high Fever, and given over by the Physicians, and that Miss Rattray, his eldest unmarried Sister was taken ill yesterday, and the Physicians recalled to her.”

There can be no doubt that the young Laird died at this time for on Sept. 23rd, Mr. Skene again wrote :—

“ The Miss Rattrays go to Edinburgh against Martinmas first, and 'tis not yet certain who comes to Craighall.”

But whoever it was, the tradition of the great Bishop must have been at least greatly weakened there by so many changes.

Another irreparable blow also fell upon the Congregation. In his letter of June 12th, 1773, Mr. Skene said :—

“ I intend, God willing, in a week or two, to make a Jaunt to the Stormont to visit the Dean [Hill], who by all accounts is in a bad state of Health.”

He was so, indeed, and died sometime before Sept. 6th. Hereupon, acting for the now aged and failing Bishop, the Presbyterian at Forfar exerted himself strenuously on behalf of the sorely tried Flock. He preached the funeral sermon for the faithful old friend, who had baptized him, and he referred the People during the Vacancy to himself and their other neighbours, Messrs. Lyall of Kirriemuir and Nicol of Meigle, for pastoral ministrations. Then, turning to the future, he concluded with the following exhortation :—

“ I hope it will not be officious to add to what I have already spoke on this melancholy occasion, that, though I have no Reason to suspect your Attachment to the Communion

of this suffering Church, yet I cannot help earnestly to recommend Steadiness in your present circumstances, and, as an Encouragement hereto, and in order somewhat to assuage your grief for a worthy Man and to dry up your Tears, I assure you that your Bishop has a promising young Man in view [*i.e.* Rev. James Taylor] in order to supply the present Loss, who will soon be put in Orders to come amongst you. I hope therefore that without Loss of Time, and as you wish to have Worship and the holy Sacraments regularly and duly administered among you, that you will exert yourselves in making out a decent Living for the intended young man, that he may be kept above Contempt and have the necessaries of Life. It lies now at your Door, and there I must leave it."

Before parting with them, Mr. Skene also made such preparations as lay in his power for carrying on the congregation. There was "a meeting held at his desire in the Chapel," and a petition was sent to the Bishop, asking him to take their desolate State into his serious consideration :—

"Assuring him that they would do their best ; representing that it would take a little time, and claiming that if only Mr. Taylor would settle down and take the risk things would right themselves (Sept. 6th)."

This was signed by John Skene, Will Cochrane, J. Hill, Greenhill, and on Sept. 17th, Lady Dunmore from Taymount also wrote to the Bishop for a successor to "good Mr. Hill."

On Sept. 23rd, Mr. Skene again wrote to the Bishop :—

"The House was fixed for Worship ; there is also Mr. Hill's Gown ; a large folio Prayer Book and Bible, which I desired might be kept for the Use of the Congregation, and also a Silver Cup for a Chalice, which was given to that Congregation by the family of Craighall, which my Brother will deliver to Mr. Taylor. A House for his eating and lodging I also bespoke, as, remembering the hardships I myself had undergone, in that Respect, I cou'd do no more, and am exceedingly happy that I have your Approbation."

But, alas ! all his efforts were in vain. On Nov. 5th, Mr. Taylor wrote from Wester Gourdie to the Bishop in this discouraging fashion :—

"I have now been here three Sundays. . . . I hear nothing but that the Congregation is very well satisfied, but it is in a very bad Order ; it does not consist of above 60 taken altogether, and most of the young folks have wandered away to the Kirk for want of being catechized. Lady Sinclair is not here at present, and Mrs. Mercer of Aldie has never yet made her appearance, and, if these two do

not attend, I do not see how I am to be supported, for I do not think they can make out more than Twelve Pounds sterling."

Considering therefore that (as already related) the much more promising opening in Athole came his way, Mr. Taylor left Blairgowrie (Wester Gourdie) altogether, and accepted what had the fair promise of being a living. And so one more Congregation died out. It is pathetic to think that Mr. Hill, who had so strenuously and successfully carried it through long years of persecution, while health and strength were his, was himself one of the causes, through the oncoming of the infirmities of old age, of the ultimate decay of the Flock. It shows how the Church suffers, when there is no "Aged and Infirm Clergy Fund." Undoubtedly Dean Hill deserves to be remembered as one of the worthies of the Diocese.

(4) *Forfar*. As comes out plainly in the foregoing narrative of Mr. Skene's activities beyond his own charge, the Presbyter of Forfar was now a bright particular star in the Diocese in days when almost every year was making the Church more and more "the shadow of a shade." In Forfar itself during the years dealt with in this chapter, there were two Confirmations taken by Bishop Rait, for the aged Diocesan, at which 35 candidates received the Laying on of Hands.<sup>1</sup> The numbers of Baptisms were respectively 20, 16, 31, 24, and 27—total, 118. Mr. Skene was present at the Synod held on July 17th, 1776.

(5) *Glamis*. Signs of Mr. Skene's connection with Glamis are still forthcoming. Thus on Dec. 18th, 1773, he wrote to the Bishop:—

"I have not been at Glammis Castle for a long time but hear from the Elect Lady every week. She holds out to a Wonder; seldom has any Complaint, and, I am told, is in great Spirits, happy in having the young generation about her."

(6) *Kirriemuir*. The following Minute regarding this charge occurs in the report of the Synod held at Forfar, Aug. 29th, 1771:—

"At the same time the above designed Presbyters [*i.e.* Dean Hill, Rev. George Skene, Rev. Wm. Nicol, and Rev. James Lyall] having taken into consideration the state of the Congregation of Kirrymuir have unanimously agreed that it would be greatly for the benefit of the said Congregation in particular, as well as for the Church in general, especially in this Corner, to have a Clergyman settled amongst them and to give them Divine Worship every Sunday, they only having had Worship once every other Sunday for several years past. Therefore they recommend

<sup>1</sup> Forfar Register.

to the Rev. Mr. Lyall to draw up a Petition and Application to the Ordinary, to be signed by the Members of the said Congregation, specifying what Encouragement a Clergyman may expect for officiating among them."

From that it is evident that, just as Memus had only recently died out as a separate charge, so also Cortachy was dwindling in importance, and Kirriemuir becoming the one centre of Church life in that district. Although, however, we might have assumed that henceforth Cortachy came to an end, and that Mr. Lyall confined his ministrations to Kirriemuir, it is to be noted that five years later, *i.e.* on July 17th, 1776, he still signed himself "James Lyall, Kirrie. & Cor." The fact therefore probably was that, instead of Services being now held alternately in the two places, they were held regularly at Kirriemuir, and only occasionally at Cortachy.

Meantime, on Sept. 30, 1771, and evidently as a result of the "Petition and Application to the Ordinary," the Rev. Arthur Petrie wrote to the Bishop:—

"As to your Commission with regard to K[irriemuir], I heartily wish I could execute it. I have indeed . . . got Account of a young Lad, who understands Latin pretty well and has begun the Greek. . . . Now could not the Clergy of Angus take the charge of getting such a Person instructed in the necessary Knowledge to fit him for Holy Orders, and might not Mr. Lyall, if he wants to be relieved of a Burden, keep him in his Family during the time required for that Purpose?

Another young man has, unfortunately, "not been taught the new Method of teaching to read English."

(7) *Meigle*. As we have seen, the Rev. William Nicol was appointed to this charge on Aug. 12th, 1770, after having served for a short time as assistant to Mr. Crombie. He attended the synodical meeting held at Forfar on Aug. 29th, 1771, at which the chief subject of discussion was the state of the Congregation at Kirriemuir. On Feb. 10th, 1773, he wrote from Fullarton (*Meigle*) as follows to the Bishop:—

"I have given you this Trouble to enquire concerning the State of your Health the past part of this rainy Winter, and to take your Advice with regard to an Application that was made to me by severals of the Heads of this Congregation residing on the other [*i.e.* on the North, or Alyth] side of the Water of Illay [*i.e.* Isla], begging that, as the River is very often rendered difficult to pass on account of the Rains, and many of them being old People, they may have public Worship two of the five Sundays I usually officiate at Fullarton [*i.e.* on the south or *Meigle* side of

the river] in a Meeting House to be provided by Mr. Smyth of Balharrie [between Alyth and the Isla]. They asked the consent of the People, who live on this side. The gentry are not averse to the scheme, but the common People object. For my own part, I think it would turn out very well, as the most substantial part of my Hearers are on the north side, and a good many of the People, belonging to the Blackwater Meeting, and some other Families, who can come but seldom to Fullarton, would be enabled to attend more regularly if our Meeting House were at Balharrie."

Mr. Nicol appeared at the meeting held at Coupar on July 17th, 1776.

(8) *Perth*. The only discoverable<sup>1</sup> item in connection with Perth for these years is that the census held there in 1776 shews that Mr. Innes was living in the first quarter of the City, and that the "Episcopalians" numbered 124. If this number had to be divided between Mr. Innes's and the Qualified congregations, each of them must have been but a tiny flock, but it has to be remembered that members living in the surrounding districts of the country fall to be added, of whom there were undoubtedly a good many. Strictly speaking, the present work closes with April 24th, 1776, but we may here step beyond the boundary and record that Mr. Innes appears as Dean, in succession to Mr. Hill, at a meeting held on July 17th of the same year. It is recorded that (surely on account of the vacancy of the See) he was "unanimously elected" to the dignity by the Presbyters of the District.

We come now to the remnants of the Diocese of Dunblane :—

(9) *Downe*. We have the following glimpses of the Rev. Charles Rose during this period :—

"*July 18th, 1771*. At Down [baptized] by Mr. Charles Rose, John James, sone of William Erskine, *Minister*, and [his Wife] Helen Drummond, in Muthill, born July 3rd.

*March 12, 1772*. At Down, by Mr. Charles Rose, Mary Ann, daughter of William Erskine, *Minister*, and [his Wife] Helen Drummond in Muthill, born March 10th."<sup>2</sup>

*Sept. 23, 1773*. The Rev. John Allan, the Bishop's Nephew was at Downe.<sup>3</sup>

The account of Mr. Rose's elevation to the Episcopate on Aug. 24th, 1774, has been given earlier in this chapter. After that we have this additional baptismal entry :—<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Perth City Records.

<sup>2</sup> Muthill Baptismal Register.

<sup>3</sup> MS. letter, T.C.

" Oct. 30th, 1774. By Bishop Rose, Helen, daughter of William Erskine, *Minister*, and [his Wife] Helen Drummond, born Oct. 22nd."<sup>1</sup>

(10). *Muthill*. In addition to the foregoing items, which have a reference to Muthill, as well as to Doune, we find from the *Baptismal Register* that in the years 1771 to 1775 the Baptisms performed by Mr. Erskine numbered respectively :—19, 17, 11, 9, 13. Like Father Skene, too, he built a new Chapel,<sup>2</sup> somewhere about this period, but it could not compare in grandeur with the Forfar edifice, being indeed a very humble affair.<sup>3</sup> Altogether Mr. Erskine was amongst the worthies of the time.

Only one more event remains to be recorded. Strictly speaking it did not occur till a few months after our Bishop had passed away, but it brought a controversy which had embittered Church life for the last 37 years, and for the healing of which he himself had laboured much, to a permanent end, and we love to suppose that his last days were cheered by the discussion of a prospect, the approaching realization of which would fill him with the liveliest satisfaction. Indeed the following words of his (Feb. 11, 1772) :—

" I am extremely glad to learn that you have ground to entertain such hopes of Bishop F[alconar], God grant they may not be disappointed ! "

are capable of being regarded as an early anticipation of what actually happened.<sup>4</sup> For on Oct. 25th, 1776, the Primus, Bishop Falconar, who had resided in Edinburgh since the year 1746, when he had withdrawn thither to escape the violence of persecution in the north, was elected to fill, and so bring to an end, the melancholy vacancy in that See, which had lasted since the death of Bishop Freebairn in 1739.

This auspicious event will lead the thoughtful student of our Scottish Church history to trace the working of Providence in its at first sight aimless controversies. For it will be observed that the disputes which raged between 1720 and 1731 were chiefly carried on as between the Bishops themselves, insomuch that the Episcopal College was then all but rent by a regular schism, but

<sup>1</sup> " Of these children, William became famous in after days as the great friend of Sir Walter Scott, and it was mainly through him that Scott derived his accurate knowledge of the Episcopal Church 'sixty years since.' As Lord Kinneddar, he was a well-known Judge, and a good many of his literary efforts may be found in the pages of the old Edinburgh Magazine. Mary Ann Erskine's name too, will be familiar to all who remember Lockhart's *Life of Scott* and she was also a great friend of Lady Nairne's, who was baptised at Muthill in 1766. John James became an Indian official and, after a long life spent in that service died in Edinburgh in 1833, and was buried in Muthill Churchyard."—Shepherd's *Strathearn* p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Or rebuilt the old one.

<sup>3</sup> Shepherd 28.

<sup>4</sup> " Bp. F." may however mean Bp. F[orbes].

that these dissensions led up to and were healed by the Concordate of 1731, after which, despite differences of opinion amongst them, there was always formal Unity on the basis of the Concordate in their official actions. And next, it will be observed that the disputes, which raged between 1740 and 1776 (of which, as we have seen, the following were the chief, *i.e.* the Perth schism of 1742; the Affair of David Fyffe in 1743, and the Revolt of the Edinburgh Presbyters of 1744) took their rise in misunderstandings between a united Episcopate on the one hand and a section of the Clergy on the other. Now, therefore, the election of Bishop Falconar to Edinburgh marked—not indeed the reconciliation of the “English Qualified” schism, which remained over for another generation to settle—but at least completed harmony between the Scottish Bishops and the malcontent section of the Nonjuring Clergy and the gathering together of the fragments of that native Communion, which had been shattered by “the mailed fist” of the Revolution of 1689!

The unworldly, unbusinesslike, and bookish Bishop Falconar, therefore, deserves well of the Church, inasmuch as he brought about the settlement of that long-standing dispute, which, despite efforts made at the time of its inception in 1744, and later in 1758 and 1761, his predecessors in the Primacy, Bishops Keith and White, had been unable to effect.

He has the distinction of being immortalized in *Boswell's Johnson*. Under the date Jan. 30th, 1779, *i.e.* nearly three years after Bishop Alexander's death, the following passage occurs in that incomparable biography:—

“On Saturday last I [*i.e.* Boswell himself] drank coffee and old port and had solemn conversation with the reverend Mr. Falconar, a Nonjuring Bishop, a very learned and worthy man. He gave two toasts, which you will believe I drank with cordiality, Dr. Samuel Johnson and Flora Macdonald. I sat about four hours with him, and it was really as if I were living in the last century. . . . This venerable gentleman did me the honour to dine with me yesterday, and he laid his hands upon the heads of my little ones. We had a good deal of curious literary conversation, particularly about Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, with whom he lived in great friendship.”

And so we reach the end. As we have seen, for the last five or six years, the Bishop had been growing more and more frail. He had now reached the ripe old age of fourscore and two, and, although upon the whole, he enjoyed better health than a great many of his brethren, yet he used to find it advisable to drink the waters at Peterhead on account of “a gravelish complaint,” and of late years was troubled with a persistent cough. Whatever

the immediate cause of his death may have been, it is certain that he was called away to his long home in the Spring of 1776.

Amongst the *Cruikshank MSS.* in Perth Cathedral Library, occurs one, on which the following inscription appears :—

S. M.

Venerandi quondam in Christo Patris  
D. Joannis Alexander, Ep. D.  
Qui anno 1724, Presbyter in Ecclesia Scoticana  
factus, ad Episcopatum anno 1743 erectus, per  
varias annorum 52 vices, summa cum laude  
in hoc Oppido consedit, Pastor fidelis, Praesul  
dignus, suis dilectus, Magnatibus in pretio  
habitus, omnibus charus, tandem annorum  
satur, Fideque et Spe fultus, ad Patres migravit  
Apr. 24, 1776. AT. 82.

Qui cupis in vita pacem, post funera famam,  
Hunc imitare Fide, Moribus, Ore virum.

Which may be thus rendered in English :—

Sacred to the Memory  
Of the late venerable Father in Christ,  
John Alexander, Bishop of Dunkeld, Who,  
Made Presbyter in the Scottish Church in the year 1724,  
Advanced to the Episcopate in the year 1743,  
Sojourned in this Town  
Through the changes and chances of 52 years,  
Winning the highest Praise.  
A faithful Pastor, a worthy Prelate,  
Beloved by his own,  
Highly esteemed by the great,  
Dear to all,  
Full of years and supported by Faith and Hope  
Was gathered to his fathers,  
Apr. 24th, 1776. Aged 82.

Wouldst purchase Peace in Life and Fame in Death ?  
Follow his holy Converse and his Faith.

This inscription was set up in marble over the Bishop's grave in the old Parish Churchyard ; was moved into the Episcopal Chapel, built in 1849, and is now since 1870, to be seen in the present Church of S. John, Alloa.

The sentiments expressed in it have the ring of sincerity in them. Moreover they correspond, so far as they go, with what we gather concerning the Bishop's character in the foregoing narrative.

Of his benevolence there is evidence in the generosity with which he was always ready to come to the financial assistance of his friends ; in his affection for his nephews, especially the attractive Arthur Petrie, whom he loved ; in the endeavours after conciliation, which he made both in the affair of David Fyffe, for he twice went to Dundee in the hope of bringing about an understanding ; in his attempt in the case of the Edinburgh revolt to use Charles Smith as a friendly intermediary, and in the large-minded disposition which he showed in the matter of the Ross and Caithness Clergy to overlook their unintentional slip, which so roused the wrath of Bishop White.

At the same time he was a man of strong character. This comes out in the firm line, which in the end he took in the affair of David Fyffe ; in the policy of refusing to give in weakly to the Edinburgh Clergy by consecrating Mr. Robertson at their demand ; a policy which he based on reasons sound and convincing amid the particular circumstances of the time and which he was successful in persuading his brethren to adopt. His fearless spirit also appears in the courage with which he went on administering Confirmation in the black years after Culloden, notwithstanding the hue and cry which was raised by that held for Mr. Conacher at Ardceanchrocan. It also appears in the uncompromising manner in which he stood up to Bishop White in the matter of Bishop Edgar's Consecration and the Primus's imperious conduct towards the Presbyters of Ross and Caithness.

We will conclude with two quotations, in which tributes are paid to Bishop Alexander's memory, by men of the succeeding generation.

The first was penned by the Rev. Thomas Stephen<sup>1</sup> forty-eight years after our Prelate's death, but while still the tradition of his life must have been remembered by the older generation. He says :—

“ [Bp. Alexander's] reputation still lives [*i.e.* in 1824] in the Church, and he continues to be spoken of by those, who knew him as a person of Apostolic simplicity, piety, and benevolence. The small Chapel, which is yet to be seen at Alloa, was bequeathed by him to his successors in that town as a proof at once of his frugality and his good wishes. He was 33 years Bishop of Dunkeld, and at length in the year 1776 he died, as he had lived, in the faith and fear of God and at peace with all mankind.”

The other was written by Dr. Walker,<sup>2</sup> who was consecrated Bishop of Edinburgh in 1830, and was well versed in the 18th century history of the Scottish Church :—

<sup>1</sup> T.S., p. 389.

<sup>2</sup> T.S., p. 294.

“ Many years ago I heard the late venerable Dr. Gaskin relate the following fact :—‘ When I first came to this Parish [*i.e.* Stoke-Newington] I remarked a plain man, who was never absent from Church, who communicated regularly every month with great appearance of devotion. I was in consequence desirous of becoming acquainted with him. He was a gardener from Scotland. He was so perfectly acquainted with everything connected with our Communion, so well instructed in every principle, and so rationally pious as excited my extreme surprise, when he told me he came from Scotland, a Presbyterian country—for of the Episcopal Church there I was almost entirely ignorant. I expressed my surprise when he replied with a strong expression of feeling :—*Ah, Sir! I was well catechized in all that by Bishop Alexander at Alloa!*



## APPENDIX.

I.—1776-1781. *The interval between Bishop Alexander and Bishop Watson :—*

As stated in the Preface, the *Life of Bishop Watson*, which follows, was written before that of *Bishop Alexander*.

Now there were next to no materials for the younger Prelate's *Life*, not only from the date of his birth in 1760 to that of Bishop Alexander's death in 1776, but also from the latter date (1776) to that of his visit to Alloa in 1781. Consequently there is a complete gap in our narrative for these five years (1776-1781).

The following particulars, however, have been collected, and provide, as it were, a bridge, albeit a slender one, over this blank period from the first biography to the second :—

*Bishop Rose.* The only acts performed by this Prelate, which are on record for these years are that he assisted at the Consecrations of Bishop Petrie on June 27th, 1776, and of Bishop Innes on Aug. 13th, 1778. [The Baptisms at *Forfar* during the time that he held the Bishopric of Dunkeld (1776-1786) numbered 187, giving an annual average of 17,<sup>1</sup> and those at *Muthill* during the time that he held the Bishopric of Dunblane (1774-1792) amounted to 215, giving an annual average of about 12. How sadly reduced compared with the number at the beginning of the century !]

At *Doune*, besides himself baptizing Mr. Erskine's child on Oct. 30th, 1774, as mentioned above, he granted certificates on May 18th, 1779, and Aug. 17th, 1783, to parents from Doune to have their children baptized at Muthill.<sup>2</sup>

*Rev. Arthur Petrie.* Though this Presbyter does not belong to our Diocese, yet for his own sake, and that of his close connection with Bishop Alexander, we add the following particulars concerning him.

He inherited his Right Rev. Uncle's valuable library.<sup>3</sup> Two months also after the latter's death, he was consecrated at Dundee, as Coadjutor to the Primus (Falconar) in the Diocese of Moray by Bishops Falconar, Raitt, Kilgour, and Rose. Next year, after the Primus, on being elected Bishop of Edinburgh, had resigned his northern Diocese, Bishop Petrie became Bishop of Moray and also took over Ross, Caithness, and Orkney, which had been vacant since the death of our friend Bishop Forbes on Nov. 18th, 1775.

<sup>1</sup> Forfar Register.

<sup>2</sup> C.'s *Moray*, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> Muthill Register.

On June 13th, 1777, Bishop Raitt of Brechin died, and our Prelate assisted in Edinburgh at the Consecration of the Rev. George Innes of Aberdeen, as his successor.

*Rev. George Skene.* On Jan. 1st, 1777, Mr. Skene wrote as follows to Bishop Petrie :—

“ I have the very great pleasure of your kind letter of Dec. 21st, together with your late most worthy Uncle’s Snuff-box, which I do indeed put the highest value on and return you my hearty thanks for the Trouble you have had in the Conveyance.”<sup>1</sup>

Two long prayers<sup>2</sup> dated 1780, and evidently written by the Rev. G. Skene, survive. They are both deeply touching, and are concerned with the fatal illness of some much-loved female relative, perhaps his wife or daughter, and the consolation which he sought in the Holy Communion.

## II.—1781-1808 :—*Additions to the Life of Bishop Watson* :—

Passing on to the years which are included in the *Life of Bishop Watson*, the following additions fall to be made :—

(1) *Forfar*. In the almost complete absence of information about the various congregations in the diocese during the Episcopate of Bishop Watson, it is interesting to come across the following reference to Forfar and Kirriemuir in a letter by the Bishop himself, dated Laurencekirk, Dec. 4th, 1792 :—

“ The great need of Confirmation, however, obliged me to be at Forfar last week, where I confirmed a very hopeful family of 40 young people, many of them sons and daughters of country gentlemen. I had much reason to be pleased with the reception I met with from Mr. Skene and Mr. Lyal and Mr. Jolly. The others I have not yet seen.”

The Baptisms at Forfar, which were administered between the date of Bishop Watson’s Consecration until his death in June, 1808, amounted to 222—Average 13. Children of the Rev. J. Skinner, who succeeded Mr. Skene, were baptized on May 23rd, 1799, Sept. 5, 1800, May 8, 1802, April 6, 1804, Aug. 14, 1806, and Aug. 31, 1808.

(2) *Kirriemuir*. The following additional notices of the Rev. W. Jolly occur in the *Forfar Baptismal Register* :—Children of his were baptized by Mr. Skene on Aug. 27, 1788 ; Dec. 22, 1789 ; and Apr. 9, 1793 ; and he baptized a child from Glamis on Sept. 16, 1788. Hitherto he had been Assistant to the Rev. J. Lyall, but on that Presbyter’s death on Feb. 15th, 1794, he

<sup>1</sup> Dill., p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Pitscandly MSS. and Printed in *The Scottish Standard Bearer* of April, 1915.

succeeded to the Charge<sup>1</sup> but died at Shielhill on July 20th, 1796. He was succeeded on Jan. 1, 1797, by the Rev. John Buchan of Montrose.

(3) *Meikle*. Additional notices of the Rev. W. Nicol are that children of his were baptized by Mr. Skene on Sept. 14, 1789, and June 27, 1791, and that he (evidently when Mr. Skene was dying) administered Baptisms for him on Dec. 4th and 5th, 1796, and Jan. 1, 1797. He also baptised three of the Rev. J. Skinner's children on Apr. 6, 1804, Aug. 14, 1806, and Aug. 31, 1808.

Passing over into Dunblane we have the following further particulars at

(4) *Muthill*. Here the Baptisms during Bishop Watson's Episcopate numbered 125, giving a yearly average of 8. [Those for Bishop Rose's Episcopate 1774-1792 will be found under the heading *Bishop Rose* in Section I. of this Appendix].

(5) *Auchindore*. In a MS. letter in the Theological College, dated Jan. 3rd, 1763, we have the following new glimpse of the congregation of Auchindore, previous to Mr. Watson's settlement there :—

“ Mr. Brown of Auchindore is past all hopes of recovery.  
 . . . Part of Mr. Brown's Congregation may attend Mr.  
 Leith's.”

### III.—*Corrections to be made in the Life of Bishop Watson :—*

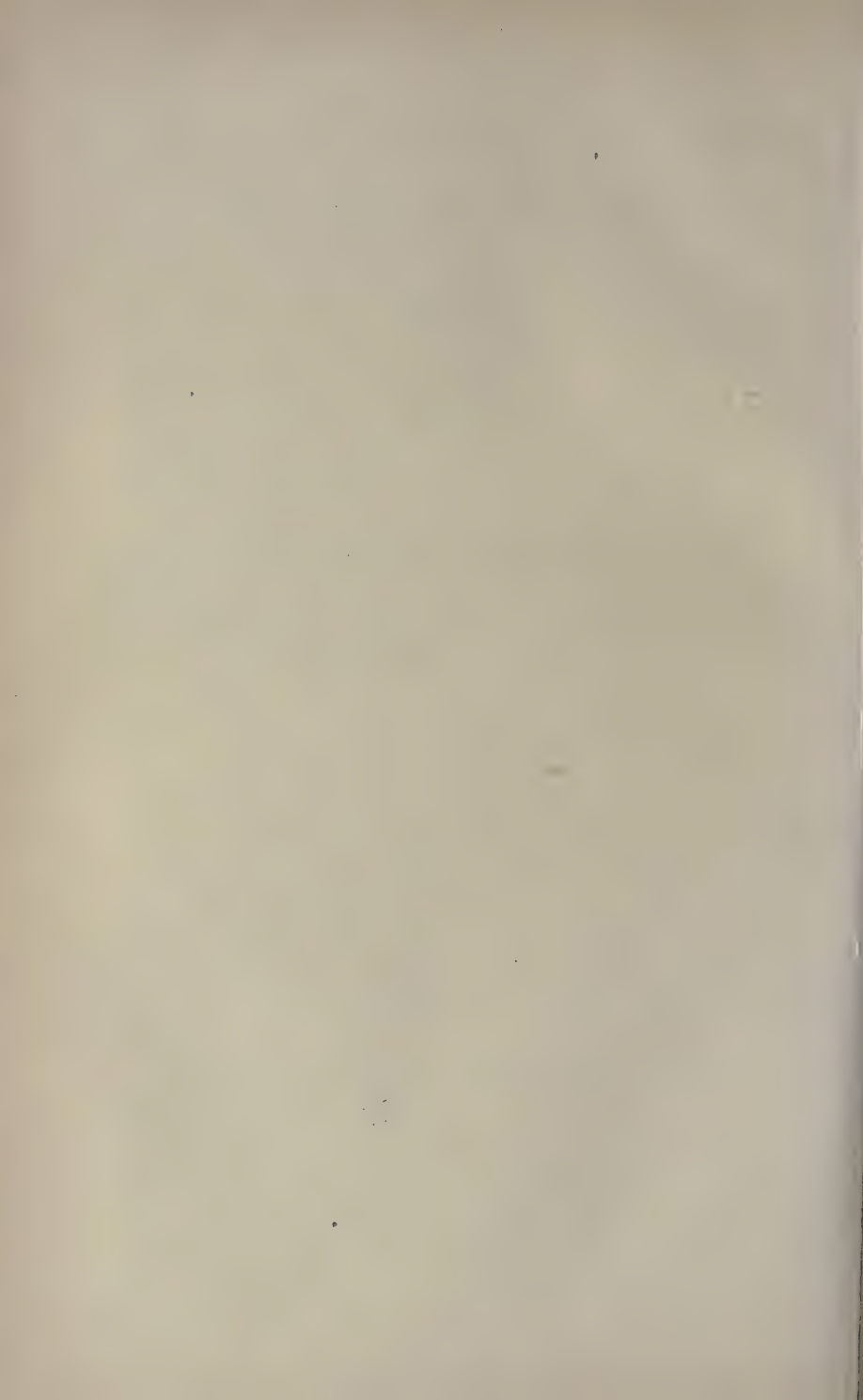
(a) *Auchindore*. I am indebted to Canon Christie of Stonehaven for the following corrections in the first paragraph of Chap. V. It was not the Rev. *Patrick*, but the Rev. *Alexander*, Lunan, who took charge of Blair-daff on the departure of Mr. Morrice, and left in 1744. Whither did he then go? Canon Christie says that it was to “ Westwater, not Luthermuir.” Dr. Gammack, however, tells me that it was “ to Inglismaldy, that is Luthermuir.” The Doctor possesses his portrait. He adds, “ I may warn you that in the Lunan connection you are sure to be trapped. There is a family connection among them, but the lines are obscure.”

My statement that one of Mr. Watson's predecessors in the charge was under a cloud, is meant to apply to some unnamed person, and not to Mr. Morrice.

(b) *Rev. Alexander Cruickshank*. In giving the age of the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank of Muthill, near the beginning of Chap. V., I have fallen into the error of confusing his Cousin, of the same name as himself, who was born on Sept. 28, 1755, with him. The real date of our Presbyter's birth was October, 1752. (See *Memorial Tablet in Muthill Church*).

<sup>1</sup> D. R.

THE LIFE OF JONATHAN WATSON.



THE LIFE  
OF  
JONATHAN WATSON  
BISHOP OF DUNKELD,  
1760-1808.

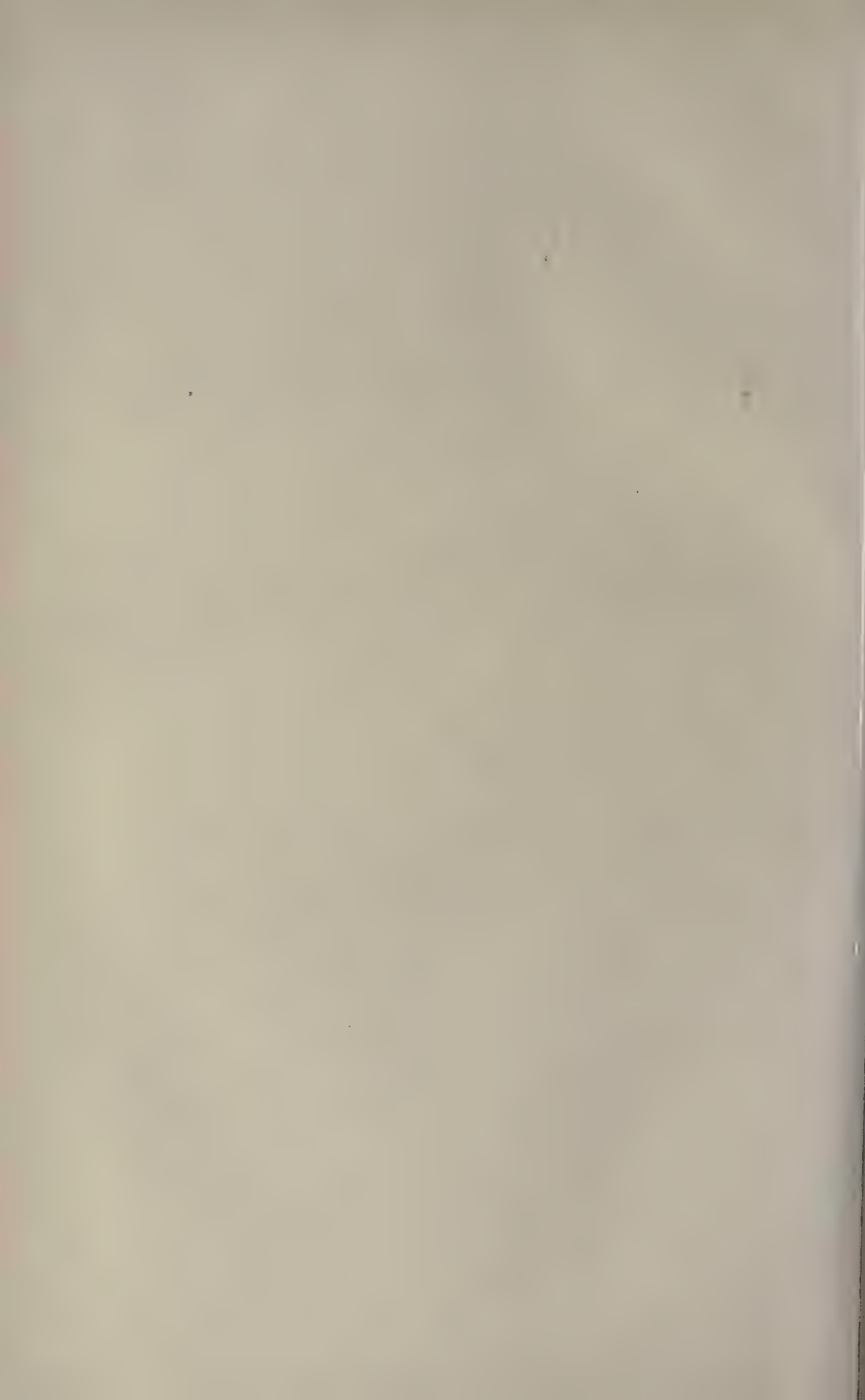
ILLUSTRATING  
THE LAST DAYS OF SCOTTISH JACOBITISM.

BY THE VERY REV.  
GEORGE T. S. FARQUHAR, M.A.,  
DEAN OF S. ANDREWS, DUNKELD, AND DUNBLANE

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## PREFACE

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CONSIDERING that Jonathan Watson, although very capable and eminently good, was not a great man, it may be asked why his life should be written. There are, I think, several reasons why it ought :

(1) In the first place, because the career of such a man, as he was, who endured poverty cheerfully for the sake of the Church, suggests thoughts, which (although they are very different from those begotten by the life of a great but not good man, such, for instance, as Napoleon I., who was impatient because he could become possessed of nothing more than Europe) are yet of an edifying nature.

(2) Then he was not merely a good man, but also Bishop of Dunkeld. And, as it so happens that the lives of all the post-revolution occupants of that See have been written in some form or another,\* and only his (1792-1808) and those of Bishops Alexander (1743-1776) and Charles Rose (1776-1786) left unrecorded, it seems right that the blank in the Diocesan history should be filled up. Accordingly in this work, not only is the life of Bishop Watson narrated with some approach to fullness, but also that of Bishop Charles Rose, as completely as the remaining material allows. The only blank, therefore, which now remains, is the period of Bishop Alexander's Episcopate; and that I look forward (if spared) to filling up, and then the biographies of the modern, "disestablished" Bishops of Dunkeld will be complete.

(3) Moreover, the following pages, although taking the career of Bishop Watson as the thread of the narrative, and as furnishing the point of view from which everything else is viewed, present the reader not only with accounts of our

\* For Bishop Rattray 1731-1742, see my sketch in *The Scottish Standard Bearer* for 1912, pp. 7-9, 42-45, 88-91, 101-102. For Bishop Torry 1808-1852, Neale's "Life of Bishop Torry." London: Masters, 1856. For Bishop Wordsworth 1852-1892, the late Bishop of Salisbury's, "The Episcopate of Charles Wordsworth." London: Longmans, 1899; and my articles for *Scottish Standard Bearer* for 1913. For Bishop Wilkinson 1893-1907, Mason's "Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson," Vol. ii. pp. 229-444. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909.

Prelate and his predecessor, but also with that of a considerable number of other Scottish "episcopal" worthies, belonging to his circle. Here he will meet Bishops Kilgour, Petrie, Falconar, Abernethy-Drummond, and Skinner; and, amongst the Presbyters, Alexander and John Cruickshank, John Allan, George Cheyne, and many others; and meet them, it is hoped, not merely as dry names but as living men, each with his own characteristics, as he appeared in his own day. In fact, so wide is the range embraced in this volume that we have a pretty complete view of the fortunes of the Scottish Episcopal Church during the last days of Scottish Jacobitism; and that in the form of a history lightened up with many a personal touch derived from private correspondence.

(4) But it may here be objected that the story has already been told, and that most sufficiently, both in the general, histories, such as those of Dean Skinner of Linshart, Thomas Stephen, J. Lawson, Professor Grub, and William Stephen, and also in the more specialised works of Dean Skinner of Forfar, Dean Walker, Archdeacon Craven, Rev. J. H. Shepherd, Dean Archibald, and others. To this the answer is that, so far as the following pages are a life of Bishop Watson, the story has not been previously told. Beyond a few meagre notices scattered up and down the works just enumerated, his memorial had perished with him. And, even so far as they are a general history of the times, they are not in the least a mere repetition of what is already familiar. They contain a new and fresh narrative. I am greatly indebted indeed to the already existing printed literature, as my references will abundantly show, but I have had at my disposal a great mass of original MSS., unused, or only very partially used, by former writers. In the first place, there is the valuable bundle of what I call the "*Cruickshank MSS.*" These consist of letters, etc., collected by the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank of Alloa and Muthill (1774-1834); handed on by him to his successor, Rev. A. Lendrum; by him to his family, and by them to the Library of Perth Cathedral. Then there are the two MSS. *Registers of Dunkeld and Dunblane*, the latter of which only recently reappeared after having vanished for a quarter of a century; and then, besides certain extracts from the *Aberdeen and Brechin MSS. Diocesan Registers*, kindly supplied by the respective Synod Clerks, I have used a bundle of MSS. hitherto kept by the Synod Clerk of Dunkeld, and the MS. Register of the old Perth congregation, still preserved at Kilmaveonaig, and through the courtesy of the Primus and

the Principal of the Theological College, have had free access to the MSS. kept in the "*Episcopal Chest.*" Using these largely untouched sources of information, I have been able to present the old history in a fresh form. New glimpses have been given of Bishops and Clergy, who are already familiar to the students of our Church history, as, for example, Bishops Petrie, John Skinner, Abernethy-Drummond, Gleig, and of Bishops Jolly and Torry, in their early days; and I have been able to make certain others, especially Bishop Charles Rose, Bishop W. Falconar, the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank, and the rest of Bishop Watson's circle stand out with a new clearness. Even of the Seabury Consecration there is a fresh peep. I have been able to contribute new information concerning the arrangements, successfully and unsuccessfully made for the Episcopal supervision of the Dioceses of Fife, Dunkeld, and Dunblane during the whole period with which the following pages deal. It is difficult to prove a negative, and only too easy to become vainglorious, but I am inclined to believe that nowhere else is to be found quite so complete an account of the varying provision made amongst the Bishops for the administration of those "Districts." I have also been able to throw some fresh glimpses of light on the Diocese of Brechin, and to supply a vivid picture of the state of ecclesiastical politics in Edinburgh about the year 1781. Many congregations also in the Metropolis, Stirling, Leith, Doune, Perth, Kirriemuir, Blairdaff, Auchindore, Banff, Portsoy, Mansfield and Laurencekirk, will here find more or less interesting notices of certain wholly forgotten events in their previous histories. Seeing, therefore, that the following life of Bishop Watson contains much supplementary information on our established history, its publication is surely justified.

(5) This being the nature of the work, it is hoped that people of two different classes will welcome its appearance :—

First, the hereditary "Scottish Episcopalian." Such an one (let purely cosmopolitan Catholics say of him what they like) has a very special and tender affection for his northern Zion. Particularly his heart goes out towards her, as she was in the days of her affliction, when, unsupported by worldly influence, and treated with the utmost rigour of the law by the State, her few and scattered congregations were thrown entirely upon their own meagre resources. He loves to read the story of those times, and, therefore, it is hoped that such will welcome this attempt to rescue from oblivion the memorials of a good, native Prelate like Bishop Watson

of Dunkeld, and of the pathetic surrender made by the Scottish Jacobites of those hopes, which had touched a prosaic century with romance!

And, secondly, I trust that the English, Colonial, and American Churchman will also find material for interest in these pages. For, if it is always instructive to watch the behaviour of an organism, with which we have been familiar in one set of circumstances, when we see it in new surroundings, then he who has intelligently studied the fortunes of the Anglican Communion on a large scale amid the comparative prosperity which it has always enjoyed south of the Border, or amid the novel circumstances of the United States, Canada, and Australia, can hardly fail to have his attention arrested, when he first reads the history of the extraordinary experiences which have befallen the Church in Scotland. And thus it is hoped that the non-Scottish Churchman who proposes to settle north of the Border will in no little degree be interested in a narrative which is calculated to initiate him into the origin of local peculiarities, amid which he has henceforth elected to live.

GEORGE T. S. FARQUHAR.

## CHAPTER I

### 1760-1790.—BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

FROM a letter of his own, dated 1st June, 1781,<sup>1</sup> in which he speaks of himself as being "just twenty-one years and five months old," it appears that Jonathan Watson was born in January, 1760. His native place was undoubtedly Portsoy in the County of Banff, because in the same letter, while criticizing the proposal that he should settle as Presbyter in that town, he says: "A prophet has no honour in his own country." Hardly anything has been recorded of his parents. Three circumstances, however, lead us to suppose that the father died when the son was yet in early childhood. The first is that he speaks of his upbringing as being entirely due to his mother; the second that he never once mentions his father in his (remaining) correspondence, and the third that, when he is contemplating the prospect of starting his clerical career as assistant to an aged divine, he places amongst the advantages of the plan that it will be "the acquisition of a father," to him. Of his mother he speaks several times, and that always with the greatest affection and respect. Thus, writing on August 28th, 1781,<sup>2</sup> he recalls, with dutiful love, "the many years of patient poverty which she has endured for my sake, and to make me what I am," and later (February 9th, 1785), on the occasion of an illness, which came upon him, he considerably does what he can to spare her anxiety and writes to a friend<sup>3</sup>:—"I said nothing to my mother." A good many years later (1805) she was still living with her son, and being cared for by him. As for his early circumstances it is already clear that they were of the humblest character, and yet that his mother's self-denial, in order that he might receive something of an education, was not thrown away upon him. His own words, already quoted, to the effect that he had been "*made what he was*" are not without a touch of legitimate self-satisfaction. He was evidently conscious that he was not altogether a failure as a scholar. And, speaking at the end of the Bishop's life, Thomas Stephen<sup>4</sup> says of him that "he was a diligent

<sup>1</sup>Cr. MSS. XVII

<sup>2</sup>Cr. MSS. XIX.

<sup>3</sup>Cr. MSS. XLIV. p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>"T. S.," Vol. iv. p. 481.

and successful student," which, when compared with his own words, justify us in believing that he began to lay the foundation of that reputation in his boyhood. We may well suppose, in the absence of information, that his mother herself and the parish schoolmaster of Portsoy were his earliest instructors; but we are definitely told that Skinner of Linshart took him in hand later. This worthy was Dean of the Diocese of Aberdeen, a theological writer of eminence in his day, and a poet who, as author of "Tullochgorum" and "The Ewie wi' the Crooked Horn," won the hearty admiration of Burns. Dean Walker<sup>5</sup> calls him:—

"A veritable ecclesiastical Nestor, who went on for nearly three-quarters of a century impressing his views and speculations on generation after generation of northern Churchmen, till at last, in the north-eastern districts there was hardly a clergyman that did not think his thoughts and speak his language. . . . As yet there was no Theological Hall, and one most potent means of influencing opinion open to Mr Skinner, as to other learned clergymen of the time, was the training of candidates for Orders."

At his feet Jonathan Watson sat. Whether, however, he received his classical, as well as his theological, training from him is not quite so clear; for while Tullochgorum's grandson, John Skinner of Forfar, says in his "Annals"<sup>6</sup>:—

"Mr Watson was trained to the Ministry of the Scotch Episcopal Church by the venerable pastor of Longside, the father of his friend and patron, Bishop Skinner. *His classical and theological acquirements did honour to his master,*"

Dean Walker<sup>7</sup> says:—

"Others, such as Bishop Watson of Dunkeld, were indebted to Mr Skinner for *only their theological training.*"

Leaving the point unsettled we conclude this chapter by remarking that since we afterwards find, that owing to the stress of the times, Mr Watson was ordained at the uncanoni-

<sup>5</sup> W.'s "Linshart," p. 159.

<sup>6</sup> p. 468.

<sup>7</sup> W.'s "Linshart," p. 160.

cally early age of twenty-one or twenty-two,<sup>a</sup> and therefore, must have resorted to Mr Skinner for his education pretty early, his mother is likely to have been of those who believed that the Episcopal Communion was the true representative of the Catholic Church in Scotland, and that thus Mr Watson was a hereditary "Episcopalian."<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> See Chap. iv. near end.

<sup>b</sup> There is said to be a letter in the Brechin Diocesan Library recommending Mr Watson as a tutor but I have not been able to see it.

## CHAPTER II

1781.—ALLOA—BISHOP ALEXANDER—BISHOP CHARLES ROSE  
AND REV. A. CRUICKSHANK

THROUGH the survival of a MS. letter<sup>1</sup> of Mr Watson, we are enabled to begin our more continuous story of his life in May, 1781.

At that date he paid a visit to Alloa, a small town situated on the north bank of the Forth, a little lower down the river than Stirling.

Entering it with him, let us, according to our general plan, pause to look round and take in the ecclesiastical situation which confronted him.

1. The *Rev. John Alexander* had been ordained to the Ministry of the "episcopal" congregation there in 1724; had been chosen to succeed the eminent Dr Rattray as Bishop of Dunkeld in 1743; had been thereafter called upon to endure the persecution, which arose in 1746, including the closing of the "meeting-house"<sup>2</sup> and the long-subsequent pressure of the penal laws; had doubtless been cheered in 1760 on the accession of George III. by that monarch's milder administration of the harsh statutes of his predecessor, and, to the grief of the congregation, by whom he was universally loved (*omnibus charus*) had been called away to his rest on April 24th, 1776, at the age of eighty-two,<sup>3</sup> only five years before Mr Watson paid his visit to the town.

2. The vacancy thus caused in the See, to which Mr Watson (though he little dreamt of it at present) was ultimately destined, did not last long. On June 27th of the year 1776, in which it occurred, the Bishops (i.e. William Falconar of Edinburgh, Primus; James Raitt of Brechin; Robert Kilgour of Aberdeen, and Charles Rose of Dunblane) were assembled in Dundee, and from thence issued a mandate<sup>4</sup> :—

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. A. Livingstone's letter of June 21st, 1746. Copy in my possession.

<sup>3</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>4</sup> Dunk. Reg.

“To the Rev. George Innes in Perth and the other Presbyters of the District of Dunkeld” and “in consequence of the above mandate the above-mentioned Presbyters (i.e. George Innes, Dean; George Skene, Forfar; James Taylor, Stormonth and Athole; James Lyall, Kirriemuir and Cortachy, and William Nicoll, Meigle) did meet at Coupar the 17th July, 1776, and unanimously signed an humble Address to the Right Rev. the Primus, Bishop Falconar and his colleagues, intimating that they had unanimously elected *the Right Rev. Chas. Rose, Bishop of Dunblane.*”

3. This Prelate (of whom, now being Bishop of Dunkeld and Dunblane, as full an account as possible will be given) was the son of the late James Rose, Bishop of Fife; nephew of the well-known Alexander Rose, Bishop of Edinburgh, and brother of the fiancée of that Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth, who was executed at Carlisle in 1746.<sup>5</sup> The following notices connected with his Ordination, thirty-one years previously, as Deacon, by Bishop Alexander occur in the Dunkeld Register:—

“RESTENNET,  
Feb. 19th, 1745.

“The Clergy being again met, a letter was produced from the Bishop, signifying his desire that Mr Charles Ross,<sup>7</sup> student in Divinity, should, as soon as he thought convenient, be entered upon trials, that so, if found qualified, he might be put in Deacon's Orders, and accordingly it was agreed that he should attend next meeting at Memus,<sup>8</sup> April 30 next to come.”

“MEMUS,  
April 30th, 1745.

“This day the Clergy being convened, appeared Mr Charles Ross, student in Divinity, concerning whom a letter was produced from the Bishop, desiring that his trials might be dispatched with all possible expedition, and accordingly it was agreed that he

<sup>5</sup> “Ep. Hist. Perth,” p. 216.

<sup>6</sup> The old ruined priory church two miles east of Forfar.

<sup>7</sup> There was not yet much fixity of spelling, e.g. Gideon Guthrie (p. 73 of his “Life”) writes Bishop Rose's name as “Ross” in 1711.

<sup>8</sup> Near Kirriemuir.

should be admitted to trials and he was ordered to compose a popular sermon upon Ps. cxxii. 6, *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, etc., and as his circumstances required that the same should be taken off his hand sooner than all the Clergy of the District could conveniently meet, it was agreed that the Reverend Messrs Will. Seton, David Guthry, Will. Gray, and John Ramsay should meet at Forfar on any day they may condescend upon, that after a fair and impartial trial of his ability for the Holy Ministry, they might (if they found him duly qualified) recommend him to the Bishop for ordination. Then the meeting was adjourned, and the next meeting appointed at Forfar on June 19th.'

Considering the events which took pace in the country at this date, events which evidently sank into the heart and coloured the whole life of the young candidate for the Ministry, we are not surprised to read the next entry:—

“There appears no Minute of this meeting having been held.”

Indeed no more Minutes of any kind were entered in the Diocesan Register till after the lapse of twenty years. It was henceforth dangerous for Churchmen to commit their doings to paper. Although, however, the public written record ceased, Episcopal and other Church acts went on. In particular, Bishop Alexander never ceased to ordain suitable candidates to the Ministry, and a list of these for the past twenty years was inserted in the Diocesan Register in 1764. In this list occurs the following entry:—

“8. Mr Charles Rose, in Perth, was ordained Deacon there [i.e. in the Bishop's Chapel at Alloa] May 17, 1745—present Mr William Erskine in Muthill and Mr Robert Lyon in Perth, Priests, with sundry Laicks.”

His ordination as Presbyter is not formally entered in the list, neither is his appointment to Doune; but in one of the entries both these events are referred to as having taken place at some time unmentioned. For on S. Matthew's Day, 1757, he is described as “Mr Charles Rose at Doune, Priest,” and as being present at an ordination held in Alloa. In fact we learn that he attended ordinations there on April 16th, 1760; S. John Baptist's Day, 1761; May 25th, 1763; S. Andrew's

Day, 1767; and Ascension Day, 1768. Pastors previous to himself at Doune were Rev. Walter Stewart from 1722 to 1728,<sup>9</sup> the Rev. Wm. Bell from not later than 1730 to 1743,<sup>10</sup> and the Rev. John Blair, who succeeded in 1744,<sup>11</sup> and writes a letter dated "Doune, 7th May, 1750," to Bishop Alexander.<sup>12</sup>

On S. Bartholomew's Day (August, 1774) he was consecrated at Forfar by Bishops Falconar, Raitt, and Forbes<sup>13</sup> to the See of Dunblane, which had lain vacant for the previous thirty years, i.e. since Bishop White's translation to Fife.

In response to the announcement of his present election to Dunkeld, he wrote from "Doun" on August 5th, 1770, to the Rev. George Innes in Perth as follows:—

"REVD. BRETHREN,—As it hath pleased God to call me, tho' most unworthy to ye Episcopal Office, so ye, my dear Brethren, have thought fit to make choice of me for your Bishop and, as I willingly accept of your election, so I hope it will be unanimously approved and ratified by my Brethren of the Episcopal Order. I earnestly beseech Almighty God to assist and strengthen me by His grace yt I may be enabled in some measure to answer your expectations in ye faithful discharge of that trust and confidence you have placed in me. And I likewise entreat and expect from you yt you will on all occasions be assisting me with your prudent and reasonable service and counsel to which I shall always be most ready and willing to hearken and pay all suitable regard, having fully determined with myself that I will never proceed to do anything of moment without first advising and consulting with you. And may God direct us all to what may be most for His glory, the edification of His Church and people, and for promoting of Catholic peace and unity. Commending you and all your concerns to the Divine blessing.— I am, Revd. Brethren,

"Your affecte. Broyr. and obliged humble servt.,

"CHARLES ROSE."

<sup>9</sup> Mentioned in Dunk. Reg. in the entry for the year 1776.

<sup>10</sup> Dunbl. Reg.

<sup>11</sup> Dunk. Reg. Scotichronicon. p. 247.

<sup>12</sup> C.'s "Argyll," p. 200.

<sup>13</sup> "T. S.," p. 389.

On August 12th Dean Innes wrote to communicate the above to the Rev. James Lyall, at Prosen-haugh, near Kirriemuir. After noting that Bishop Rose had omitted to mention the name of the Diocese to which he had been elected, in his letter, he adds <sup>14</sup> :—

“ However we all well enough know the meaning of it, though it may perhaps look strange-like to those who may see it fifty years hence. You may now look upon Mr Rose as Bishop of Dunkeld; the Primus has already ratified your deed of election and there is no reason to doubt that the other Bishops will do the same.”

4. The late Bishop's place, at *Alloa*, was supplied by the appointment of the *Rev. Alexander Cruickshank*, of whom also (both because he was the lifelong friend of Mr Watson and also the collector of those MSS. on which this history is primarily based) we will give, so long as he is at Alloa, a full account.<sup>15</sup>

As for his birth, he belonged to the family of Leslie of Rothie <sup>15</sup> and was born in Aberdeenshire. The extract from the Baptismal Register of Blairdaff given in Chapter V shows that he was baptized on September 28th, 1755, in which case he would be about five years Mr Watson's senior, assuming that he was christened in infancy.\* In November, 1775, when he was only twenty, he was examined for Deacon's Orders by one of the Edinburgh Clergy, the Rev. John Allan, who was sent, evidently in the vacancy of the See of Fife, by Primus Falconar for the purpose, and who wrote <sup>16</sup> thus to Bishop Petrie on November 20th :—

“ When I was last at Alloa, I waited upon Bishop Rose [who had no doubt come there to help the octogenarian Bishop Alexander] who has agreed to put Mr C——k in Orders upon S. Andrew's Day, and I prescribed him his trials before I went away. I likewise intimated worship there next Sunday [evidently Bishop Alexander was quite *ab agendo*]. I will endeavour, D.V., to be out on Monday or Tuesday and stay till the Ordination is over. I gave Mr C——k a hint as to paying a reasonable board for the time he should be in the Bishop's [i.e. no

<sup>14</sup> D. R. App. V.

<sup>15</sup> Shepherd gives the story of his later Ministry at Muthill, pp. 32-43.

<sup>16</sup> Craven's and Bishop Forbes "Journals," pp. 51-52.

\* But see Appendix to Dr Alexander.

doubt Bishop Alexander], and he seemed to think that it was highly equitable. By all accounts . . . Mr Erskine of Alloa and Collector Hay, etc., are resolved to have a qualified clergyman, but if Mr C——k gives satisfaction, as I hope he will, it will not diminish his congregation much."

As witnessed by a deed<sup>17</sup> signed and sealed by Bishop Rose, the Ordination was duly performed "in the Chapel at Alloa" on S. Andrew's Day (November 30th), and on December 1st Mr Cruickshank began keeping the accounts of the congregation, the original MS.<sup>18</sup> of which now lies before the present writer.

In it occurs the following item: —

"The Offty at my Ordination . . . . . £ I I I 0

It was about five months after Mr Cruickshank's settlement that Bishop Alexander died, but the young Deacon stayed on and continued his ministrations. Notwithstanding, however, that on October 9th, 1776, Bishop Rose, acting doubtless for the Primus, summoned him to Doune and ordained him Presbyter in his own Chapel there,<sup>5</sup> his status at Alloa remained only that of a licensed clergyman. Seeing, therefore, that, since his ordination as Deacon, he "had purchased to himself a good degree," he was made the recipient of the following letter<sup>20</sup> from Primus Falconar of Edinburgh on July 30th, 1777:—

"REVD. SIR,—As you have officiated at Alloa very commendably for some considerable time, I, as Primus, do by these presents collate you to the pastoral charge of the episcopal congregation in the above-named place, and, as the concurrence of my Right Rev. Colleagues ought to be obtained to this, your collation, there is no reason to doubt their agreeing to grant your request. I wish you much success in your holy function, and that God may bless you and your flock is the humble and fervent prayer of, Reverend Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"WILM. FALCONAR (Bishop of Edin. and Primus)."

<sup>17</sup> Cr. MSS. IX.

<sup>18</sup> Cr. MSS. XVI.

<sup>19</sup> Cr. MSS. X.

<sup>20</sup> Cr. MSS. XII.

From at least the beginning of 1778, and onwards, besides having charge of the Alloa congregation, Mr Cruickshank also ministered to that of Airth on the south side of the river; and his original MS.<sup>22</sup> of the offertories gathered there is still extant, along with the record of those of Alloa.<sup>23</sup> Mr Cheyne of Stirling seems to have rendered occasional help here.<sup>24</sup> Since money also is noted as having come in "from the Dunfermline people," we may presume that Mr Cruickshank ministered, according to his opportunities, in that more-distant town also. Altogether he seems to have had his hands full and to have struggled bravely on behalf of the diminishing church!

No full description of his personal appearance survives but we have the following vivid pen-and-ink sketch, which was given many years after his death to the author of "Episcopacy in Strathearn"<sup>25</sup>:—

"Eh, Mr Shepherd, Mr Cruickshank was a bonny man; he had a curl down ilka side o' his face an' anither i' the howe o' his neck!"

<sup>22</sup> Cr. MSS. XVI.

<sup>23</sup> Cr. MSS. XXIV.

<sup>24</sup> In what Diocese was Alloa in the eighteenth century? Two facts are in my possession derived from original MSS. The one in the Dunblane Register, 1735-1743, that it was *not* in the Diocese of Dunblane, and the other in two mandates issued by the Bishops in 1792-3 to the Presbyters of the united Dioceses of Dunblane and Fife, in which it is included. The inference obviously is that it was in the Diocese of Fife (St. Andrews). But from 1743 to 1776 the Presbyter at Alloa, i.e. the Right Rev. John Alexander was Bishop of Dunkeld. During these thirty-three years, therefore, Alloa was provisionally considered to be in the Diocese of Dunkeld.

In 1775, Rose, Bishop of *Dunblane*, ordained Mr Cruickshank Deacon for Alloa, but he did this merely to oblige the infirm Bishop Alexander. In 1776, he signs himself Bishop of *Dunkeld* in ordaining Mr C. Presbyter, after Bishop Alexander's death; to whose See he had by this time succeeded. He was acting now for the College of Bishops in the absence of a Bishop of Fife. In 1777, Bishop Falconar of *Edinburgh* institutes Mr C. to the charge, acting as Primus for a vacant See. After a time, i.e. about 1799, the charge became extinct. When, however, in 1808, the Rev. M. Russell (afterwards Bishop of Glasgow) became assistant to Bishop Gleig in Stirling, he was sent by the latter to Alloa to revive the charge,\* and thus, because Stirling was in the Diocese of Edinburgh, Alloa slipped over into Edinburgh, where it has remained ever since. But its situation on the north bank of the Forth, and its history as traced above, are still suggestive of the Diocese of S. Andrews (Fife)!

\* "Three Churchmen," p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> "Shepherd," p. 37.

5. Such was the friend, one of the worthies of the Scottish Episcopal Church, whom Mr Watson visited in May, 1781. Of this visit we have no particulars. We only know that it took place, and that Mr Watson was sorry when the time came for bringing it to an end. Having left Alloa he repaired to Edinburgh, where he "landed on Monday morning, much the better of his sail 'down the Forth,' " and then, wrote to Mr Cruickshank <sup>28</sup> :—

"Had it not been the disagreeable pain of a second farewell, I might have seen you on Sunday. This, I suppose, you'll have heard, and likewise the time of my departure."

<sup>28</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

### CHAPTER III

1781.—VISIT TO EDINBURGH—PRIMUS FALCONAR—DR ABERNETHY-DRUMMOND—EXTREME AND MODERATE JACOBITES—DR GLEIG—THE INCIDENTS OF THE TOAST; OF THE FAST; AND OF THE RESTORATION ANNIVERSARY

WE now have a sketch of things, as Mr Watson found them in the Scottish Metropolis.

First, as became an ardent young Churchman, he paid his respects to the chief pastor of the Diocese. "I have been introduced," he says, "to the Bishop." And who was this Prelate? Primus William Falconar—to the modern reader, perhaps, a mere name, but to the Churchmen of the period a venerable divine—venerable not only because of his seventy-three years and his character, but also on account "the changes and chances of this mortal life," which he had experienced in his Episcopate. He was a native of Elgin,<sup>1</sup> and, while ministering at Forres, had been consecrated Bishop of Caithness and Orkney by Bishops Rattray, Keith, and White, in pre-Culloden days, on September 10th, 1741, when the Church, though sorely distressed, had not yet been reduced "to the shadow of a shade." After his consecration he returned from Forres<sup>2</sup> to Elgin; and, at Michaelmas, 1742, was elected to the See of Moray,<sup>3</sup> "as well on account of his great learning and exemplary piety and probity, as of his being acceptable to the Laity." But alas the terrible blow fell in 1746, and the Bishop fled before Butcher Cumberland to find safety in Edinburgh. There, without ceasing to do what circumstances allowed for his northern Diocese, he thenceforth ministered to an Episcopal congregation.<sup>4</sup>

In 1755, he issued an edition of the Scottish Communion Office, and, in conjunction with Bishop Robert Forbes, another in 1764, of which Bishop Dowden writes<sup>5</sup>:—

<sup>1</sup> Craven's "Ch. in Moray," Chap. xv.

<sup>2</sup> I possess the MS. of the sermon which he preached on leaving Forres on August 8th, 1742.

<sup>3</sup> Craven's "Ch. in Moray," p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Craven's "Ch. in Moray," p. 121.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop D.'s "Annotated S. O.," pp. 94-99.

“ Though it was not sought to give a formal synodical sanction to this edition, yet, as having been the outcome of deliberations among the Bishops, and as having been issued under the authority of the Primus, it was rapidly and generally accepted throughout the whole Church. Its text is rightly regarded [i.e. from 1764 to the Provincial Synod of 1911], as presenting the recognised Scottish Communion Office—substantially the *textus ab omnibus receptus*.”

In 1776, he was elected Bishop of Edinburgh,<sup>6</sup> which, owing to dissension between the Clergy of that city and the Episcopal College and (as appears from a most important but hitherto little-noticed passage in a letter of Bishop Alexander’s<sup>7</sup> some specially close connection of that See with the exiled Prince, had remained vacant for nigh forty years. On receiving this promotion without, of course, ceasing to be Primus, to which office he had been appointed as Bishop White’s successor in 1762,<sup>8</sup> he resigned the Diocese of Moray, in which he was succeeded (1778) by his coadjutor, Bishop Petrie.<sup>9</sup>

To such a venerable a man as this was Mr Watson now introduced, and we may be sure that the interview did not fail to give an impetus to the youth’s ardent “ Episcopal ” and Jacobite proclivities!

Mr Watson proceeds thus in his letter to Mr Cruickshank<sup>10</sup> :—

“ I have been introduced to the Bishop and all his Clergy, except Dr Webster,<sup>11</sup> who happened always to be from home, when I went on that errand. Dr Abernethy left word with my friend Walter to introduce me to him. I found him very kind; but, if I mistake not, hasty and resolute.”

This Dr Abernethy was also a man of note in the Church. He was descended from the family of Saltoun in the County of Banff,<sup>12</sup> and Dr Gordon, after giving particulars of his descent, adds:—

<sup>6</sup> “ Grub,” Chap. iv. p. 90.

<sup>7</sup> “ Scotichronicon,” pp. 295-6.

<sup>8</sup> “ T. S.,” p. 377.

<sup>9</sup> “ Ep. Ch. in Moray,” p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>11</sup> Charles Webster, appointed colleague to Rev. Wm. Harper at S. Paul’s, 1774. Died 1806, see “ A Jacobite Stronghold,” Chap. v and Chap. vii.

<sup>12</sup> “ T. S.,” p. 483. “ Glasgow Cathedral, 1894,” pp. 267-270.

"In a document in my possession, recommending him to Bishop John Alexander for the Order of Deacon, subscribed at Alloa on May 30th, 1744, by 'Da. Young, Ninian Irving, Alexr. Livingstone, Will. Bell and Will. Erskine, Presbyters,' he is designated 'Mr William Abernethy, late at Pitfirran.'"

In the Dunkeld Register under the same date occurs the following entry:—

"Mr William Abernethie, Governor to Collonel Hacket of Pitfirran's sons, after having given proof of (his) sufficiency before a Committee of Clergy appointed for that purpose (was) ordained Deacon in the Bishop [Alexander's] Chapel there [at Alloa] present 'the same Presbyters as signed his testimonial.'"

In the same Register his Ordination as Priest on December 19th, 1744, to serve the congregations at Nairn and Logie,<sup>13</sup> is recorded. On April 16th, 1760, however, he is described as "Dr Abernethie in Edinburgh," and it is on record<sup>14</sup> that in 1774 the number of communicants at his chapel in the Metropolis was two hundred.

Mr Watson's estimate of his character seems to have been very just, for Thomas Stephens speaks of him thus<sup>15</sup>:—

"He was a learned man and was much engaged in controversial writing; but, it is said, his frame of mind was ill-suited to the useful adaptation of that knowledge to time, place, and circumstances; hence his addresses, whether from the Press or pulpit, failed for the most part to produce the effects which the good, the zealous, and the benevolent [doctor] himself uniformly wished to produce."

Later on he married Miss Drummond, the heiress of "classic Hawthornden," and was thenceforth known by the name of Abernethy-Drummond. We shall see a good deal more of him in the course of our story.

While Mr Watson was paying his respects to the fathers of the Church in Edinburgh, incidents very characteristic of the time occurred there.

<sup>13</sup> Near Perth.

<sup>14</sup> "A Jacobite Stronghold," p. 74.

<sup>15</sup> "T. S.," p. 483.

Before we relate them, however, we must recall the different phases of opinion then prevalent amongst the remnant of nonjuring "Episcopalians." Of these there were two, the more extreme and the more moderate.

The former held that loyalty to the "King over the water" was a point of religious faith, which, if anyone could not hold, "he was guilty of an offence against God and the Church, which could not be purged save by repentance and priestly absolution."<sup>16</sup> Of these views the Rev. William Harper was a stout supporter.

This Presbyterian<sup>17</sup> had previously officiated at Newtown of Bothkennar, in Stirlingshire. In Lord Rosebery's "List of the Rebels," he is described as having been "very active in assisting the rebels and waited on the Pretender's son at Falkirk." He had succeeded to the incumbency of the congregation in Carrubber's Close on the death of the Rev. Patrick Gordon in 1756 (who in turn had been settled as colleague of the Rev. William Harper, *senior*) and continued therein till his death, which took place in 1785, four years after Mr Watson's visit. Mr Watson gives us a vivid and characteristic glimpse<sup>18</sup> of him as a prominent man among the extreme Jacobites:—

"Mr Harper (he says) shaking his fist in John Allan's" face, vows that nothing but the revelation from Heaven can annul the *Jus Regium*."

The other party, although also true to the Stewarts, supported their loyalty on less uncompromising grounds. Their case is well stated in a MS. letter<sup>20</sup> of the Rev. George Gleig addressed to the Rev. A. Cruickshank on October 9th, 1783, in which he says:—

"The matter in debate between the Jurors and us, as it stands at this day, can be settled only upon the principles of reason, to which revelation gives no assistance; and I need not tell you that upon both sides of such a question much may, and indeed must, be said. At the R(evolution) the matter was very different so that it was not with logical accuracy that you classed together the Nonjurors of that, with

<sup>16</sup> W.'s "Linshart," p. 50.

<sup>17</sup> "A Jacobite Stronghold," pp. 66-73.

<sup>18</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII. end.

<sup>19</sup> Mr Cruickshank's examiner.

<sup>20</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVI.

those of the present day. The compliers of that day resisted the supreme power and thereby transgressed a plain command of Scripture; they had sworn to maintain the government of their native Prince and yet they took part with his worst enemy and thereby perjured themselves in the grossest manner. After all this you will naturally ask what are my principles respecting submission to civil government. I answer that, as things stand at present, I would be as loath to take the oaths in question, as you would be, because I think that these oaths are so framed (at least one of them is so framed) as expressly to approve of the R(evolution), which my conscience will never allow me to do. I think likewise that, after studying the nature and end of government with the closest attention, I am able to give, that — has the right, and, while he lives and claims that right, I am not at liberty to give my allegiance to another. At the same time I am sensible that on these topics there can be no demonstration, and that many thousands, greater in every respect than I, have thought differently from me. I return, therefore to my first assertion, that the tenet in debate, viewed with respect to Christian Communion (and in this respect only I reviewed it) as it is in itself of little certainty, is of less importance, and I think myself warranted to say that the Bishop or Presbyterian, who should exclude a man from communion *only* because he *differed from him* in opinion respecting a matter of such doubtful disputation, would far exceed the powers with which he is invested."

This clears the way for the understanding of the following incidents which occurred when Mr Watson was in Edinburgh.

The first of these we may call the incident of the *toast*.<sup>21</sup> Mr Cheyne, a stout Nonjuror,<sup>22</sup> "of honest, old-fashioned principles," was, it appears, Presbyterian at Stirling,<sup>23</sup> but, says Mr Watson, "he has been from home with his wife this some time, and is not expected till the end of this week." From this absence trouble arose for him. He had apparently, on a recent occasion, proposed a Jacobite toast in somewhat enthusiastic terms, and Mr Taylor, Presbyterian at Leith, who

<sup>21</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>22</sup> Cr. MSS. XXI.

officiated for him in his absence, wishing "to curry favour with Dr Abernethy," whose Jacobitism was of the more moderate type of Mr Gleig,<sup>24</sup> had been "acting a part very unbecoming the character of a clergyman; a part totally inconsistent with it; that of sowing discord amongst his brethren." In a word, he had been disseminating a highly spiced version of Mr Cheyne's Jacobite toast. According to him its terms were "Confusion (which they would have damnation) to all rogues from Archbishop Tillotson to Dr Abernethy!" This story, in Mr Taylor's version, was being circulated and discussed in Edinburgh, while Mr Watson was there. He could not bring himself to believe that Mr Cheyne had been indiscreet enough to use the actual words attributed to him by Mr Taylor, and he wrote to Mr Cruickshank:—

"If you was with Mr Cheyne and him when he was last time at Stirling, you would hear if Mr Cheyne proposed 'the toast in the alleged terms . . . which I leave you to make your own reflections upon and which I'm far from thinking Mr Cheyne proposed in the words of Mr Taylor. Mr Harper [also], like an honest man, felt as he ought for his friend [Mr Cheyne]; vowed to Mr Allan he could never trust one of them [i.e. the Moderates] after Jamie Taylor; said it was ungentlemanly, it was cruel, it was beastly and unmerciful!" But the Moderates would not pause to give Mr Cheyne the benefit of the doubt. "The Doctor, like a man of true honour, storms and vows revenge! However," concludes Mr Watson, "I hope in God Mr Cheyne will be able to extricate himself and leave James Taylor in the ditch, whose credit, upon my word, is cracked with me!"

The second was the affair of the *fast*.<sup>25</sup> About the beginning of the year, it seems, the Bishops had expressed their approval of observing a fast, which had been ordered by the (to the Jacobites, *de facto*) Government. This quasi recognition of the Hanoverian regime was interpreted as a sign of the weakening of Jacobite loyalty, and was indeed a characteristic sign of the times. It was therefore received with mixed feelings in Nonjuring circles. The more uncompromising party, with whom Mr Watson sympathised, refused to keep the fast; the others, who in Edinburgh were much the more numerous, observed it. Hence arose mutual expostulations. Mr Watson's account of the affair is as follows:—

<sup>24</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>25</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVII., p. 1.

“I have been severely handled on Mr Cheyne’s and your non-compliance with the Bishop’s orders for praying on the fast day. I said, ‘I should have Jacobites act consistently; at the same time, though I did not know, I had not the least doubt that Mr Cheyne and Mr Cruickshank would give a satisfactory vindication of their conduct.’ I was surprised to see Mr Taylor adduce such frivolous arguments for a cloke to himself and time-servers like him. One of them was ‘that clergymen might as well have no prayers on Sunday because George III. had them’—as if the Lord’s Day had been equally the institution of his present usurpship.”

And Mr Cruickshank, writing some months later (December 11th, 1781), to his cousin John, adds <sup>26</sup> :—

“Let me also tell you that some of the Edinburgh Clergy are for having me banished the country for not having observed the fast. What do you think of that?”

The last incident mentioned by Mr Watson in this letter from Edinburgh may be called the affair of the *Anniversary of the Restoration*. From what occurred in the matter of the Hanoverian fast, we are not surprised to find that the observance of this Jacobite festival was far from universal amongst our Churchmen in Edinburgh. Indeed the vast majority of them refused to have anything to do with it. But, after the part played by Mr Taylor of Leith in the matter of Mr Cheyne’s toast, we are surprised to find *him* coming out strong on this later occasion on the side of the extremists. Mr Watson says:—

“Mr Harper alone has prayers this day of all the Edinburgh Clergy and Mr Taylor has prayer and sermon in Leith, where the Royal Oak Club are to attend, and are afterwards, in honour of the anniversary, to have a grand supper in the Thistle Lodge, to which, it seems, he has been appointed Chaplain-in-ordinary.”

After thus informing Mr Cruickshank of what was going on in the capital, Mr Watson announces his intended departure for the north, in words which imply that his health is still far from satisfactory:—

<sup>26</sup> Cr. MSS. XX.

“ I mean, under God, to set off to-morrow in an Aberdeen packet and am happy at the thought of leaving a place which I do think would prove my death in a very short time.”

He does not tell us how long the journey to Aberdeen by sea would take him, but in a letter from the Rev. John Allan to Bishop Petrie, dated April 5th, 1777, the writer, proposing to travel by land from Edinburgh to Aberdeen and thence to Meiklefolla, says <sup>27</sup> :—

“ I now propose, D.V., to set out [from Edinburgh] on Monday first and make Dunfermline my first stage. On Tuesday I hope to get the length of Dundee—Achlouchin, where Inshuan lives, on Wednesday—Drumlithie on Thursday, and Aberdeen on Friday, before dinner. The soonest I can promise myself the pleasure of seeing your Reverence at Meiklefolla will be the Wednesday or Thursday following.”

So that from Edinburgh to Aberdeen would take him about as long as a fast steamer now takes from Liverpool to New York.

Mr Watson finishes his letter thus <sup>28</sup> :—

“ You’ll excuse inaccuracies and bad write, when you know I can’t lean too long forward on account of my breast. I would beg particularly to be remembered to Mr and Mrs Cheyne and family. My compliments to Mrs Allan.”

<sup>27</sup> Cr. MSS. XI.

<sup>28</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

## CHAPTER IV

### 1781.—ORDINATION

IN the same letter as that in which he gave Mr Cruickshank the foregoing sketch of Jacobite affairs in Edinburgh, as they were in May, 1781, Mr Watson takes his friend into his confidence on another subject also, namely that of the prospect of his own Ordination. He writes<sup>1</sup>:

“As you informed me, I have found the Clergy urging me pretty closely to enter into Orders. However, I have withstood their repeated solicitations.”

But his reluctance was caused, not by any feeling against the Ministry, but only by doubts about the sufficiency of his bodily strength. And there was one charge in particular, which appealed very strongly to him. It was that of Perth. In 1746, the rising in favour of Prince Charlie had resulted in the sanguinary execution of the Rev. Robert Lyon, the junior Presbyter there, and in the withdrawal of his senior colleague, the Rev. Laurence Drummond, who at best was “but a valetudinary man.” Their place had been almost immediately filled by the Rev. George Innes. This worthy Presbyter, after thirty years’ service in the fair city, had been appointed Dean of Dunkeld on July 17th, 1776,<sup>2</sup> and now, after an additional five years, was beginning to suffer from the infirmities of old age, and to look out for a younger and more active colleague to assist him. The Rev. J. Allan, writing<sup>3</sup> on May 16th, 1781, says:—

“Simon Reid is willing to take his chance there [i.e. in Perth] in case Bishop Kilgour [of Aberdeen] consents, and a decent provision can be made for him.”

But the following extract from Mr Watson’s letter shows us that this proposed arrangement fell through.

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XVII.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Reg. of Dunk. and “Ep. Hist. Perth,” p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> “Ep. Hist. Perth,” p. 219.

"I saw (he says) the Doctor's pupil, Simon Reid, last night at supper, and, notwithstanding his figure being much against him, he seems to be a pretty smart young man. He was designed to settle at Perth just now on account of Mr Innes's bad state of health, but, as Bishop Kilgour had the Doctor's promise previous to this, he sets out to-morrow for the north country, when he is to be fixed at Aradoul and Fochabers."<sup>4</sup>

This naturally resulted in the eyes of those, who were interested in Perth, being turned on Mr Watson himself and not without good hopes of success, for he says:—

"I own I have given my promise that, if it please God to restore me to my health, I will not refuse the congregation at Perth. If Mr Innes should have any time, I'll have him in a manner for a father, which must be a great acquisition to a young man of my age, which is just twenty-one years and five months, according to my mother's calculations."

So things stood, when he left Leith by the Aberdeen packet for the north.

His immediate object on landing was to benefit his health. With this purpose in view he seems to have tried first one place and then another. For on August 28th, 1784, he writes<sup>5</sup> to Mr Cruickshank:—

"Owing to my being these two months out of the Boyne country and (in consequence of my present unsettled manner of life) my friends' ignorance where to find me, your letter came to my hand no less than fifty-eight days after date."

In the course of his ramblings he met the Rev. John Cruickshank, Presbyter at Mansfield<sup>6</sup>:—

"I would have answered your letter," he goes on, "immediately, but as it referred to your cousin, I waited till I should see him; and, now that I have had that pleasure, he desires me to remember him to

<sup>4</sup> In 1801, he was in Leith, and later at Carrubber's Close, Edinburgh, till 1815.—"A Jacobite Stronghold," pp. 91-95.

<sup>5</sup> Cr. MSS. XIX.

<sup>6</sup> Cr. MSS. XXI.

you and to acquaint you that the letter you allude to in mine never came to hand, nor any one whatever, since the one you sent by your humble servant."

After this he gives us a glimpse into the medical treatment considered suitable for such a case as his in that day:—

"I went to Peterhead last month [i.e. July], but, upon speaking with the Bishop [i.e. Kilgour of Aberdeen] and his son, the doctor, instead of benefit from the water, their sentence was *danger*; and, in place of the well, the doctor, from the symptoms that then appeared, sent me a-nursing and grazing; or, if you will, to drink mare's milk and eat vegetables, which I have continued to do ever since with Bishop Petrie [of Moray, at Meiklefolla<sup>7</sup>]. who upon my word is kind to me beyond belief; but after all I can't say I'm better, though no worse, I thank God."

And then he comes to what he calls "the main business" of his letter. We have just seen that, before he left Edinburgh, he had promised that, if his health allowed, he would be ordained and go to the help of Dean Innes at Perth. This would have been a great relief to the mind of Bishop Rose of Dunkeld and Dunblane, in whose Diocese Perth (according to the Concordate of 1731) lay. But now, it seems, our young friend had found cause to change his mind. A more urgent call than that to the fair city was constraining him. It appeared to be his evident duty to go to the assistance of Bishop Petrie. This Prelate was a man of apostolic character, who, though forgotten in these times like his brother, Bishop Falconar of Edinburgh, deserves to be gratefully remembered in the Scottish Church. He was a nephew of the late Bishop Alexander of Dunkeld, and, having been educated at Aberdeen and Edinburgh was ordained by Bishop Gerard of Aberdeen, and sent to Meiklefolla. Of his labours there Dr Craven<sup>8</sup> says:—

"Never strong, Petrie had a dauntless spirit and succeeded in accomplishing a work—both congregational, tutorial, and diocesan—which might have appalled others. He was soon singled out for promotion. . . . Falconar nominated him as his coadjutor for Moray and he was consecrated at

<sup>7</sup> "T. S.," Vol. iv. p. 378

<sup>8</sup> "Ch. in Moray," p. 124.

Dundee, on June 27th, 1776.<sup>9</sup> . . . In 1777, he had Ross and Caithness added to his district, and in 1778 [on the resignation of the See by Bishop Falconar<sup>10</sup>] he was collated by the Episcopal College as Bishop of Moray. . . . Petrie led a celibate life and his house at Meiklefolla became a seminary for the youths who desired to serve at the altars of the Scotch Church.<sup>11</sup> . . . He went about doing good and journeying unweariedly and without consideration of his bodily health.<sup>12</sup> . . . The pleasures of the body he had so entirely got above, that such a thorough conquest of them has rarely been seen in these times. In any age Petrie would have adorned the Episcopal chair! ”<sup>13</sup>

Ardent, self-denying soul! He saw the Church rapidly fading away into “the shadow of a shade” and, determined that at least it should not be by his fault, wore himself out in a noble effort to prevent it! When Mr Watson visited him, not only was he wearing himself out in the discharge of the work of his Diocese and of his own congregation of Meiklefolla, but he was also, as the nearest Presbyter, labouring to serve the vacant neighbouring congregations of Blairdaff and Auchindore. But it was an uphill fight. Bishop Kilgour, in whose Diocese these two vacant charges lay, was anxious to relieve his brother Bishop of their responsibility, and young Mr Watson was filled with the generous ambition of being the means of bringing that relief. He explains his state of mind very forcibly to Mr Cruickshank as follows<sup>14</sup>:—

“To this purpose it will be necessary for me briefly to represent the state of the Church in this quarter (even though I believe it needless to *you*), that Bishop Rose and Mr Cheyne may judge whether I act up to duty, and this at a short glance. In this Diocese [i.e. Aberdeen, over which Bishop Kilgour presided] there are three vacancies, which Bishop Petrie and your cousin [John Cruickshank, Presbyter at Mansfield] have to supply, besides their immediate charges, viz. Auchindore, Blairdaff, and

<sup>9</sup> On August 20th, 1776, Mr Jolly writes, “The worthy Bishop Petrie’s promotion has afforded me matter of much thanksgiving.”—

<sup>10</sup> “Ch. in Moray,” p. 124.  
Cr. MSS. VIII.

<sup>11</sup> “Ch. in Moray,” p. 125.

<sup>12</sup> “Ch. in Moray,” p. 126.

<sup>13</sup> “Ch. in Moray,” p. 124.

<sup>14</sup> Cr. MSS. XIX.

Old Meldrum. The first of these (is) at least twelve miles from Meiklefolla; Blairdaff as far; and Old Meldrum nine miles from Mansfield. In the winter season it is simply impossible to supply them all, which you must the more readily grant, when I tell you that the Bishop's [Petrie] health is so broke that he never has an hour free from pain, day or night, and his appetite is so reduced by a spasm, which prevents anything entering the mouth of the stomach, that many days he will not eat above two inches of bread. Sensible of this, Bishop Kilgour designs me for Blairdaff and Auchindore; and, circumstanced as his Reverence is, I ask you, dear sir, is it my duty to leave him? I know you will never give such a judgment. I certainly should think myself happy in serving the Bishop, who confirmed me [i.e. Bishop Rose], as a Deacon, but I flatter myself his Reverence will never ask it [i.e. by insisting on the fulfilment of the Perth promise] when he considers the circumstances. I beg my humble duty to his Reverence and my best respects to Mr and Mrs Cheyne and family and any well-wishers at Alloa."

The responsibility of entering upon Holy Orders and of deciding between Perth and Blairdaff evidently moved Mr Watson considerably, and he concludes with some words of unstudied but touching eloquence:—

"Now, after all this, I do not think I can be of any service to the Church; for this lingering distemper, which has reduced me considerably, must doubtless cut me off; and, believe me, I hardly wish it otherwise but for the sake of my mother; for, when I reflect on the many years of patient poverty, which she has endured for my sake, and to make me what I am, and think what a shock my death must be to her in the flower of my age, when some recompense might be expected from me, I confess my resolution fails me and I pray God to spare me only to support her in her old age."

The following allusion to the matter occurs in a letter addressed to the Rev. John "Crookshank" (written probably by the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank) and dated December 11th, 1781<sup>15</sup>:—

<sup>15</sup> Cr. MSS. XX.

“ I was very sorry to think poor Mr Watson is in so bad a state of health . . . but, allowing that he were pretty strong again, surely Bl—f and Au—e is a charge by far too much for him, especially in winter.”

The direct evidence of Mr Watson's Ordination is not forthcoming, but there is no doubt that he received the Imposition of Hands at this time and that he was settled at Blairdaff, from which he dates his subsequent letters, in accordance with the scheme detailed above. As for Auchindore, in a letter<sup>16</sup> of October 27th, 1782, he mentions having been there recently, as if it were a matter of course.

In the latter year his new Bishop became Primus. Of this Prelate Dean Wiseman says<sup>17</sup>:—

“ The character of Bishop Kilgour may be viewed to a large extent as the natural outcome and reflection of his environment. Sufferance was the badge of the Church in those days, and patience was a great virtue. Dignity and reserve became a second nature. Devotion and the studious mastery of great principles were the conditions of adherence to the Church at all.”

He was one of those who in his earlier Ministry read the service fourteen or fifteen times a day in order to keep his people together, without violating the penal laws. But it was discouraging work, and we are not surprised to hear that, by the time he was old, he was “ subject to fits of low spirits.” It is of him, however, that the story is told that:—

“ The Bishop was one day dining with the officers of the army at Peterhead, when the toast of the King's health went round. When it came to the Bishop's turn, he quietly said: ‘ Our true and lawful King.’ One of the younger officers called out, ‘ That's not King George!’ Whereupon the Bishop calmly turned to the Colonel and said: ‘ I call you to witness, sir, that this young gentleman has declared that King George is not our true and lawful King!’ ”

As for Dean Innes at Perth, he had to struggle on as best he could until 1786, when Bishop Rose ordained William Jolly, who was living at Gask,<sup>18</sup> to the Diaconate and sent him to serve in the fair city.

<sup>16</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>17</sup> “ S. S. B.,” 1905, p. 223.

<sup>18</sup> Dunk. Reg.

## CHAPTER V

### 1782-3.—EARLY DAYS AT BLAIRDAFF

THE natural subject to take up in this chapter, and to interest us here, would have been the state of affairs in the Blairdaff and Auchindore congregations in 1782, and the manner in which the young Deacon conducted himself at the beginning of his Ministry there, and how he was advanced to the Presbyterate. But next to nothing has come down to us on these subjects. All that the present writer has been able to glean about the charge is the statement of Dean Walker<sup>1</sup> to the effect that somewhere about 1743, when the congregation was likely to have been more flourishing than at the date when Mr Watson entered upon his duties there, the communicants numbered three hundred, and the stipend of Mr Morrice,<sup>2</sup> the Presbyter, was then £13 per annum. When Mr Morrice left, or died, the flock, says Dean Walker, was tended by the Rev. Patrick Lunan,\* but Thomas Stephen<sup>3</sup> informs us that Meiklefolla was Mr Lunan's own cure, and therefore he must have kept things together at Blairdaff from his headquarters. In any case he left for Luthermuir in 1744. There is then a gap in our information. We next find, from a statement made by Mr Watson,<sup>4</sup> that there was an Incumbent previous to himself, but that he left in ill-odour. It was then, we presume, that the overworked Bishop Petrie came to the rescue from Meiklefolla, until relieved by the Ordination of Mr Watson himself. Curiously enough, not much further light is thrown upon the charge by the latter event. We have just heard from Mr Cruickshank that, even if the young cleric had been in strong health, the work would have been heavy enough for him. We also learn from Mr Watson that he had been able to rescue the Baptismal Register, dating from Mr Morrice's time, which had been lost, and that the following entries, dealing with his friends, were to be found in it:—

<sup>1</sup> "Bp. J. S.," pp. 5-15.

<sup>2</sup> A Robert Morris is amongst the Aberdeen Clergy, *circa* 1746.  
—Cr. MSS. LIII.

<sup>3</sup> "T. S.," p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII. (near end).

But see Appendix to "Bishop Alexander."

“The following extract relates to G. Cruickshank. On Sept. 28th, 1755, Alexr. was baptised; Feb. 11th. 1758, John; March 4th, 1760, Robert; and April 14th, 1762, George. If there were any more children I cannot find their names.”

This extract shows us that John Cruickshank belonged to Blairdaff and also that the congregation continued without a break after Mr Lunan's departure in 1744.

And then we have a little bit of information, not indeed about any ecclesiastical matter but about the harvest in the district. The date, let us remember, is October 27th, and Mr Watson says<sup>s</sup>:—

“This seems to be a very judgment-like time: barley is not all cut down yet and hardly 20 [?] of oats is in the sheaf, through all the country.”

And again in a postscript<sup>s</sup>:—

“Tho' this letter was wrote a fortnight ago, my being at Auchindore caused me to forget it. In that quarter most of their oats are green yet. Hereabouts a third part of them is cut, and the barley mostly in the yard. Yesterday it began to snow, at the same time blowing hard; to-day the shocks are all blown over and hid among snow; a thing which I never saw. Our farmer in Blairdaff won't have 8 bolls of meal out of 16 bolls sowing of , yet he wishes everybody were as well, because he has three stacks in his yard. What will be the consequence, God knows! (25th Oct.)”

Such is all the information we have concerning Mr Watson's Ministry at Blairdaff and Auchindore.

We have, however, fuller information concerning his neighbours and friends than is given us about his own congregations.

The *Rev. John Cruickshank* of Mansfield and Old Meldrum, writing<sup>r</sup> to his cousin at Alloa on February 19th, 1782, thanks him for a contribution, which he had sent, and continues:—

<sup>s</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>r</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>r</sup> Cr. MSS. XXI.

"I was at Old Meldrum on Ash Wednesday, when there was a subscription, which, including yours, amounted to £18, 13s., which is far from being an ill beginning. I hope the work will go on cheerfully."

What was the work? Not unlikely the building of a new chapel to replace one burnt<sup>8</sup> by Cumberland in 1746, after Culloden.

He goes on:—

"Since I last wrote you, we have lost a worthy Clergyman, *Mr Leith* at Huntly, *requiescat*, etc. [This Presbyterian had served the charge since 1744, and had thus been called upon to endure the persecution there. He had been suggested for the Bishopric of Aberdeen in 1768, when Bishop Kilgour was elected, but had refused to allow his name to be brought forward. He was long ill before his death.<sup>9</sup>] There is a very young man, *James Walker*, lately put into Deacon's Orders and intended for the Huntly congregation. [This divine<sup>9</sup> was actually instituted to that charge and fulfilled a long and laborious Ministry of sixty years, though not all in one place, before he died. He became Dean of Moray in 1829, and survived till 1842.] I told *Mr Jolly* that you was inquiring for him and he desires me to remember him to you with the warmest affection and regard; he is truly a saint and a great treasure in this place. [On August 2th, 1776, *Mr Jolly* wrote<sup>10</sup> from Meiklefolla to the Rev. A. Cruickshank:—"I am appointed by the Bishop to officiate alternately at Turriff and Parkdargue. . . . I like my situation very well and shall, I hope, be equally happy in the service of God in His church in whatever corner He in His all-wise Providence, by the mediation of His Deputy, shall place me."] *Bishop Petrie* [Meiklefolla] is well but I have not seen him since I had yours: *all the Clergy here* [this must have included *Mr Watson*] are in their usual way."

The occurrence of the public fast, which, as we saw, had caused such heart-burnings in Edinburgh, while *Mr Watson* was there in the previous year, seems to have

<sup>8</sup> "Linshart," p. 40.

<sup>9</sup> "Ch. in Moray," pp. 351-4.

<sup>10</sup> Cr. MSS. VIII.

stirred up equal feeling in Aberdeenshire in 1782. We learn this from the following paragraph in Mr J. Cruickshank's letter, from which the last extract was taken:—

“ Mr Sangster [i.e. Rev. William Sangster<sup>11</sup> at Longmay] Mr Jolly, and your friend [this seems to be Mr Watson] have been just as honest [i.e. in their Jacobitism] this year as formerly, and, if there be any dependence on mankind, will continue so to their dying day. Mr Jolly kept his closet that day and mourned for his brethren; Mr Sangster and I had naturally invited each other to such a feast as we could afford, that we might drink a glass to our mistaken brethren [i.e. those who had had prayers at the Bishop's recommendation.] The storm here, indeed, hath prevented our meeting but I was not forgetful of the day, and neither, I hope, was my brother.”

He then adds:—

“ Your intelligence as to Old Meldrum Walker is news indeed; his conduct hitherto has been unaccountable, and his settling at Leith would be no more!”

This appears to be as much as to say that the gentleman in question was about to migrate from the Jacobite north to the more moderate south and to resort to the ministrations of the terrible Mr Taylor, who had so distinguished himself by observing the fast, etc., in 1781, as related in Chapter III., and that Mr Cruickshank was not surprised since the move would be of a piece with Mr Walker's general principles!

These extracts from the Mansfield letter, dealing as they do with Mr Watson's friends, are quite relevant to our purpose, because we cannot believe that one, who was so taken up with the doings in connection with the fast in Edinburgh in 1781, failed to be moved on the same occasion in 1782, when, as Mr Cruickshank shows his brethren in Aberdeenshire were all in excitement about it.

During this year two episcopal appointments were occupying the minds of Mr Watson's circle:—

(a) On April 5th, 1777, after the death of Bishop Raitt of Brechin, the Rev. J. Allan, writing to Bishop Petrie,<sup>12</sup> had said:—

<sup>11</sup> W.'s “ Linshart,” p. 162. Mr Sangster succeeded John Skinner as Dean of Aberdeen in 1807.

<sup>12</sup> Cr. MSS. XI.

“The meeting of the Brechin Clergy for the election of their Bishop is on Wednesday next at Marykirk, but who is to be the person I cannot say.”

“The Person” proved in the end to be the Rev. George Innes of Aberdeen;<sup>13</sup> but already, after an Episcopate of only four years, he had been called to his rest.<sup>14</sup> The sequel was that a strong party, probably a majority, of the Diocesan Clergy were eager to have Dr Abernethy-Drummond as their Bishop. But their demand met with determined opposition, as will appear from the following quotations from contemporary correspondence. In a letter dated December 11th, 1781,<sup>15</sup> the Rev. A. Cruickshank says:—

“Your fears about Dr A’s [i.e. Abernethy-Drummond’s] promotion just now have been too well founded, and let me tell you B.R. [i.e. Bishop Rose] is the only Bishop who has acted, and I’m persuaded will act on this occasion consistently and steadily, for Bishops Kilgour and Petrie both seem to be too condescending, and in a manner forced into a compliance by the boisterous threats of some of the Brechin Clergy, and, if that be a good reason to advance a man to the Episcopate, because some Presbyters clamorously call for it, I know not what is to be done when the Bishops (?) are convinced that *that man* is not properly qualified for such an high office; but take it as my opinion the Bishop [i.e. Rose] will never concur in the Doctor’s promotion, for he [the Arch-Jacobite] thinks the Doctor’s principles [for which see Chapter III.] bad both in regard to Church and State, and has plainly told Bishop Kilgour so. Now what will be the issue of this same contest [in filling up the vacancy in the See of Brechin] God alone knows, but in the meantime it looks exceeding dismal and threatens little less than the removal of our candlestick. May the Lord Jesus give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great danger we are in by our unhappy divisions. May He take away all hatred and prejudice and *whatever else* may hinder us from godly union and concord, that we be all united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity! . . .

“N.B.—Let us have your sentiments on this Brechin story and that at full length.”

<sup>13</sup> “T. S.,” p. 391; but Mr Beatt of Inchyra voted for Dean Innes of Perth. “Ep. Hist. Perth,” pp. 219-222.

<sup>14</sup> “Lawson,” p. 322.

<sup>15</sup> Cr. MSS. XX.

The result was that no appointment was made to Brechin either now or for some years to come, and Mr Watson, writing to the Rev. A. Cruickshank on October 27th, 1782, shows us the Diocese being ministered to by the indefatigable but frail Bishop of Moray<sup>16</sup>:—

“ Since that period [i.e. Sep. 25] he says, Bishop Petrie, attended by your cousin [i.e. the Rev. John Cruickshank of Mansfield and Old Meldrum] has been visiting the Diocese of Brechin, confirming throughout and communicating the people of Glenesk, and I expect to see them some time this week on their way home from the Grampians.”

Tradition still relates the gratification with which Bishop Petrie was hailed, when seen coming slowly up the glens on his little pony, his check plaid serving for gown and lawn sleeves.<sup>17</sup>

While the settlement of the matter was still being delayed Bishop Rose wrote a letter to Bishop Petrie, dated from “ Doune, February 17th, 1783,”<sup>18</sup> in which he fully justifies the remarks made about the attitude taken by him by the Rev. A. Cruickshank in the extract already quoted:—

“ Your letter to him [i.e. to the Rev. J. Beatt of Inchyra] is very proper, and I think it is absolutely necessary that you insert abstracts from Dr A’s letters to you, and I’m sure you have as much under hand as may convince any reasonable person of the impropriety of advancing him to the Episcopate; and, as a testimony of my being agt. his promotion, besides his bad principles he has published to the world in his controversy with Bishop Hay, and in his case in view, I send you a specimen of what we are to expect from him, in the inclosed letter wrote to Bishop Falconar, who sent it to me with his observations upon it. He says, ‘ I now send you another specimen of Dr A’s imperious and arbitrary spirit; you’ll see by it that he wants to trample upon us and in the most assuming manner to subject the Episcopal authority to his arbitrary will. May God grant us peace!’ ”<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>17</sup> “ Ch. in Moray,” p. 126.

<sup>18</sup> C.’s “ Argyll,” p. 257-8.

<sup>19</sup> All that Grub says on the whole incident is :—“ The See remained vacant several years,” (Vol. iv. p. 91). So also “ Lawson,” p. 322. The two Stephens are altogether silent.

(b) The other Episcopal election, which enlisted the interest of Mr Watson, and in which he doubtless was called upon to play his part, brought about no such unfortunate collision of parties in the Diocese concerned as was taking place in Brechin, and proved to be in its result one of the most auspicious events that ever happened in the Disestablished Church. Mr Watson gives the following account of it under date October 27th, 1782<sup>20</sup>:—

“ In this Diocese [i.e. Aberdeen] Ecclesiastics have been pretty interesting this fortnight or three weeks; on this hint I believe your curiosity is on tip-toe: understand then, sir [i.e. Mr A. Cruickshank] that on the Friday before the 17th a public letter to the Presbyters of the Diocese of Aberdeen was sent under a cover to your Rev. cousin containing an account of our Ordinary’s [i.e. Bishop Kilgour’s] infirmities, through old age and the decays of nature, and his desire to have a coadjutor to assist him in the Episcopate during his life and to succeed to the charge of the whole Diocese on his decease. Mansfield, you know, is active, and on this occasion he really made it appear; he collected the sentiments of the whole diocese (unanimous to one, viz. Mr Aitken) in favour of the Rev. Mr Skinner, Junior, and slept in Peterhead [where Primus Kilgour lived] on Tuesday night.”

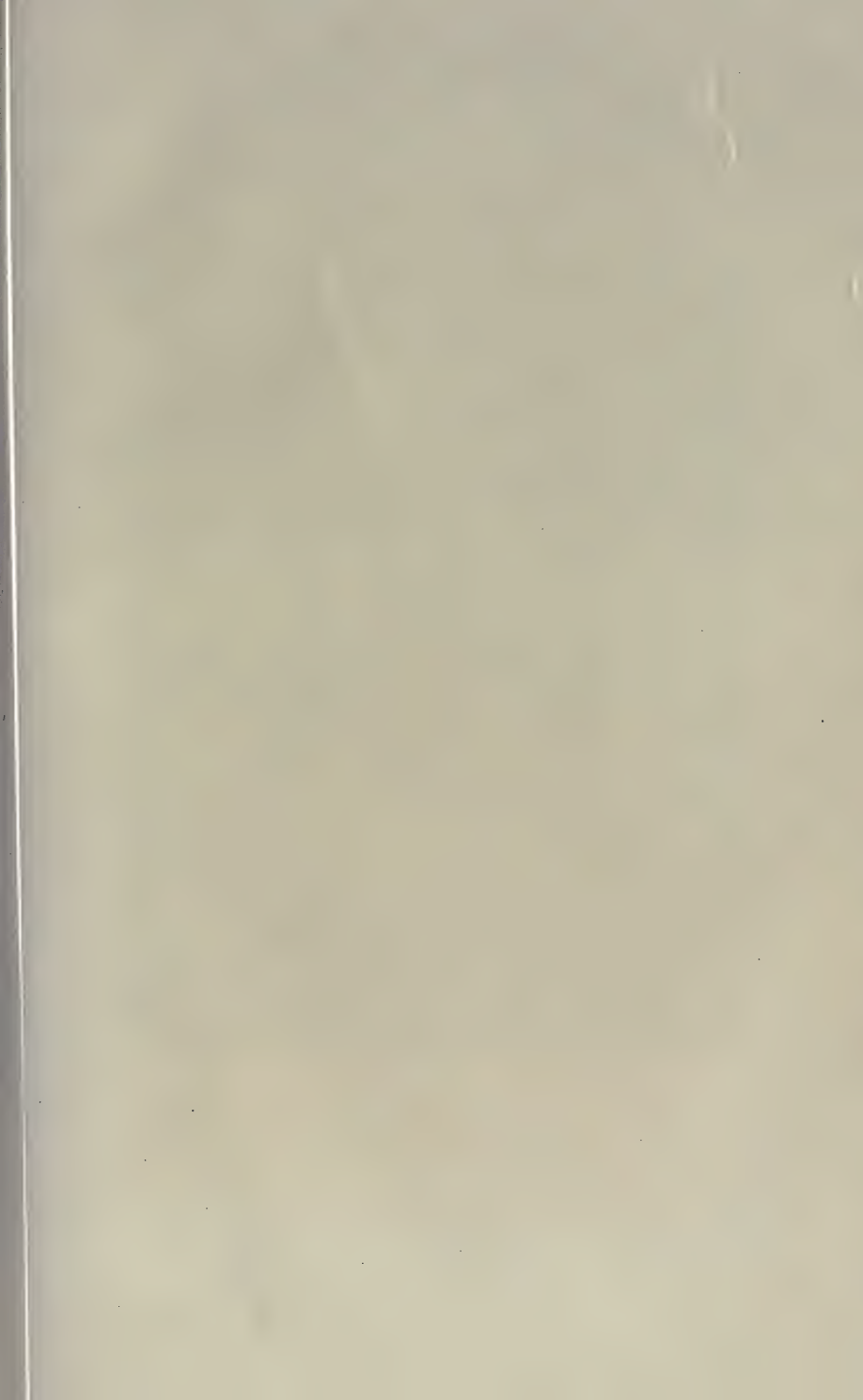
Although, however, there was no collision of parties on this occasion within the Diocese itself, far removed as it was from southern innovators like Dr Abernethy-Drummond and Rev. George Gleig [of Pittenweem in Fife<sup>21</sup>] yet there was interference from without. Mr Watson tells us that “on Mr Skinner’s election Dr Abernethy objected to his promotion.” This was done *partly* owing (Mr Watson continues) to differences of political opinion, for it is well known that the Bishop-elect’s father, Dean Skinner of Linshart, “was no Jacobite,”<sup>22</sup> and Doctor Abernethy may have been anxious to show that, after all, he himself was a Jacobite, though he could not go all lengths with Bishop Rose; and *partly* owing to theological differences, which must be touched upon in the next chapter. But, of course, the “resolute and hasty” Doctor was not in a position to prevent the Rev. John Skinner’s promotion, and, accordingly, as Mr Watson informs us:—<sup>23</sup>

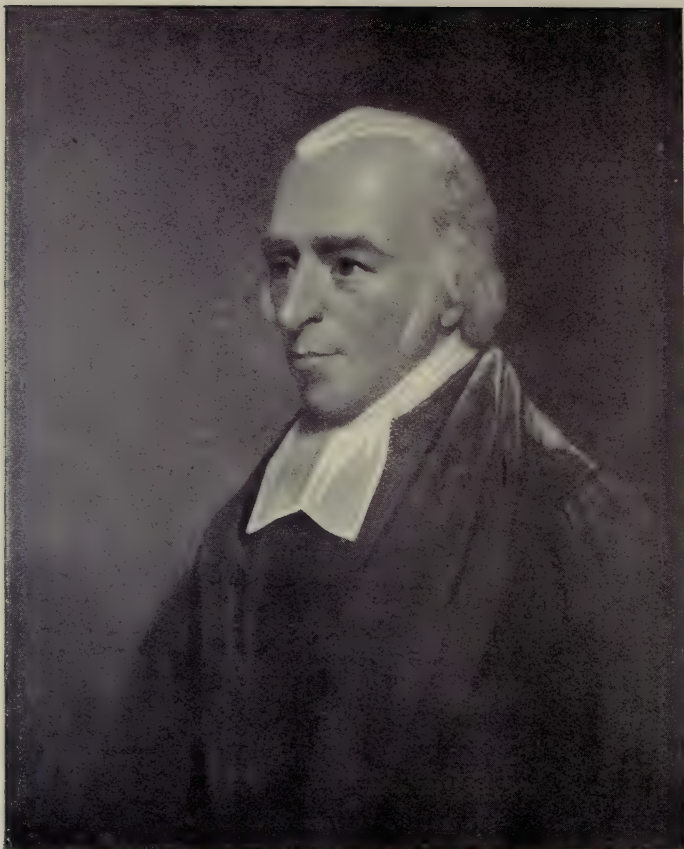
<sup>20</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>21</sup> “Bp. Gleig,” pp. 187-209.

<sup>22</sup> W.’s “Linshart,” p. 45.

<sup>23</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.





BISHOP JOHN SKINNER.

*[Reprinted from "Scottish Standard Bearer."]*

"On Wed. 25th ult. (i.e. Sept.) Bishops Kilgour, Rose and Petrie consecrated Mr Skinner at Luthermuir, in Mr Jamieson's Chapel,<sup>24</sup> near Marykirk, in Kincardine."

And thus the son of Mr Watson's preceptor<sup>25</sup> :—

"A man of breadth, tolerance and conciliation, as well as a man of firmness and consistency; a great and successful administrator, whose history is the history of the last sixteen years of the eighteenth century and of the first sixteen of the nineteenth, was added to the Scottish Episcopate!"

In the same year Mr Watson was interested, not only in those two episcopal elections but also in the beginnings of the ministries of two personal friends:—

(a) It will be remembered that, when he was in Edinburgh in 1781, he wrote a description of the Jacobite toast proposed by Mr Cheyne of Stirling, and its effects (Ch. III). But that Presbyterian was now called to his rest, and the Rev. A. Cruickshank, writing on December 11th, 1781, to his cousin in the north, gives us a description of his last hours<sup>26</sup> :—

"I'm exceedingly sorry to tell you that our brother Mr C(heyne) at Stirling about 9 a.m. is summoned to his long home, being struck in a palsy on S. Andrew's Day in his own house and died Saturday last. (He lay) for three or four days quite insensible and almost speechless; was two days about the middle of the week he spoke several sentences very much to the purpose, but would say little at a time. He is a great loss for us in this corner but the Will of the Lord be done. *Requiescat in pace*. God grant us all grace to take warning by his sudden call to have our lamps always burning that whatever time our Lord doth call us, we may be ready."

Now Mr Cheyne was survived by his son, of whom the Rev. J. Cruickshank wrote on February 19th of this year to the Rev. A. Cruickshank at Alloa<sup>27</sup> :

<sup>24</sup> For a description of the little thatched meeting-house of Luthermuir, and a notice of the Rev. A. Jamieson, see Dean W.'s "Bp. J. S.," pp. 15-16.

<sup>25</sup> "Bp. J. S.," pp. 309-313.

<sup>26</sup> Cr. MSS. XX.

<sup>27</sup> Cr. MSS. XXI. p. 1.

“Your accounts of Mr Cheyne please me much. I hope he will follow his father’s steps on earth [the context shows that the writer is thinking of loyalty to the Stuarts] and be seated next to him in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

And the occasion which led him to express such a wish was the circumstance that he was succeeding his father as Presbyter at Stirling, so that Alloa being near Stirling Mr John describes him<sup>28</sup> as his cousin’s “now neighbour.” But things did not go smoothly with the new Incumbent. A certain Mr Anderson, one of the Stirling managers, appears to have acted in such an autocratic way towards him that Mr Alexander Cruickshank came to his support from Alloa, and this produced the following expressions of thanks from Mr Watson. Dating from Blairdaff on October 27th, he says<sup>29</sup> :

“The proposals of George Anderson are such as I would have expected from one of those managers, who choose to command and make their clergyman obey, and your answer is written with such spirit and politeness, as I would have wished to come from the pen of my friend. For your honest warmth and activity in the service of Mr Cheyne you have my sincere thanks; but it was your duty, sir, and tameness would have been a sin.”

The second friend in whose entry upon the Ministry he was interested was one better known than Mr Cheyne, and destined hereafter to succeed the Presbyter of Blairdaff as Bishop of Dunkeld. He writes to Mr A. Cruickshank on October 27th, 1782<sup>30</sup> :—

“Wednesday [at the end of September] was the day of Mr Torry’s Diaconation, a friend of mine and a worthy young man. Bishop Petrie [of Moray] was drinking the waters [i.e. at Peterhead] so that my friend had the honour of two Bishops and four Presbyters at his Ordination.”

Altogether, therefore, although the congregational affairs under Mr Watson at Blairdaff and Auchindore are a blank to us, we have pretty full information concerning his wider Church interests in 1782.

<sup>28</sup> Cr. MSS. XXI. p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII.

<sup>30</sup> Cr. MSS. XXII. p. 2.

## CHAPTER VI

### HUTCHINSONIANISM

WE come now to a feature in Mr Watson's career which, from the point of view of Christian orthodoxy, requires some apology. Our hero was a Hutchinsonian in his views. If, therefore, we would understand him, we must obtain at least some general idea of this system, to which he gave his adhesion. Seeing that it is an absolutely exploded doctrine, the present writer is obliged to confess that he has made no attempt to study it at first hand. But he here gives a brief outline of it, derived in substance from Ch. IV. of Dean Walker's "Life and Times of the Rev. John Skinner, M.A., of Linshart, and Dean of Aberdeen":—

"The system was a reaction against (1) The Newtonian system of the universe, which appeared to conflict with the Old Testament cosmogony. . . . The Newtonians maintained that the early chapters of the Bible contained merely a popular account of the solar system, and one not compatible with a distinct knowledge, on the part of the writer, of the true and scientific system, which in fact had been altogether unknown, till the recent series of astronomical discoveries which culminated in the Newtonian theory of gravitation" (pp. 69-70).

We, who can remember how the promulgation of Darwin's principle of evolution fluttered the peaceful doves of pious orthodoxy in the nineteenth century, can readily enter into the feelings with which "old-fashioned" people in the eighteenth century regarded the dissemination of Newton's equally startling doctrine.

"It may be imagined therefore with what satisfaction persons holding this theory [of the *literal* inspiration of Holy Scripture] would welcome the Hutchinsonian teaching, which entirely controverted the Newtonian system, denying the theory of gravitation, and maintaining that the early books of the

Bible contained for those who could sound their depths of meaning, a Moses' Principia more profound and accurate than Newton's" (p. 70).

Secondly, also, Hutchinsonianism

"Was a reaction against (2) the Unitarian system of theology, which it endeavoured to overthrow from the Old Testament.

"According to Hutchinson we find in the very beginning of the Bible distinct etymological indications of the presence and activity of the three Divine Persons in the Blessed Trinity ruling and regulating everything both in nature and grace according to their several offices" (pp. 71-2).

Thus, by their championship of Moses against Newton, and of the doctrine of the Trinity against the Unitarians, the Hutchinsonians were obviously orthodox in their cast of mind and general intentions. But it remains to be added—*first*, that the characteristic argument by which they endeavoured to establish their conclusions has long been universally admitted to be untenable; *secondly*, that in trying to vindicate Moses, they did injustice to Newton; and *thirdly*, that in fleeing from Unitarianism they ran into serious error on the opposite side. A word is necessary on each of these points:—(1) And first with regard to the characteristic argument, by which they endeavoured to establish their positions.—

"Hutchinsonianism was founded on Hebrew etymology. Its great dogma was that certain 'capital words' of the Hebrew Bible, considered in their root meaning, and apart from the modern and unauthoritative apparatus of vowel points, contained a key to 'all religion and philosophy'; a method for confronting and overthrowing the learned doubters of the day . . . by boldly launching against them a wholly original theory, elaborated with deep learning and patient study from the roots of the sacred language."

But though they deserve credit for keeping alive the study of Hebrew at a time when it was much neglected, their method of interpreting it was, as Mr Gleig declared,<sup>2</sup> absolutely futile.

<sup>1</sup> "Linshart," p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVI.

(2) Secondly, not only was their method of procedure vain, but the results which they reached by it, were mistaken also. (a) To begin with, they fell into *scientific* error. As a matter of fact, the writer of the first chapter of Genesis was inspired to take the best scientific knowledge of his day and to insist that all the heathen and immoral elements with which it was then confused, must be expunged and the disentangled story of Creation retold, so as to represent the origin of things as being the handiwork of the one true, and all-holy God. But the Hutchinsonians thought that, along with this divinely revealed religious truth, the scientific theory of the inspired writer's day was to be continued also, and that thus we were bound to believe that the world was created 6000 years ago in six stages of twenty-four hours each. But the progress of science, even in their own time after the teaching of Newton, and still more now, has shewn that, while nothing has shaken, or can shake, the teaching of the inspired writer concerning Creation being the handiwork of the one Almighty and All-holy God, yet the old scientific theory about the 6000 years and the six days of twenty-four hours each was only a grandly conceived hypothesis, admirably suited to serve as a starting-point for physical investigation, in the days of its infancy. When, therefore, the Hutchinsonian method of interpreting Hebrew led men to suppose that Moses intended to represent the physical science of his day as infallible and final; and that Newton and the science of modern times wished to contradict the revealed religious truth concerning the part played by God in the act of Creation, they were wronging both Moses, as representing him as pitting the infancy against the maturity of science; and also Newton, as if he were opposed to faith in the exercise of the Divine creative power in the framing of the universe, which he certainly was not.

(b) And, next, while their method thus led them into scientific error, it also led them into a serious one of a theological character. For in their dread of Unitarianism; in their dread of separating too far between the First and Second Persons of the Holy Trinity, they were rash enough to deny that the method of distinction was the eternal generation of the Son!

Such was Hutchinsonianism—"a philosophico-religious system, which originated with a North of England Layman (Mr John Hutchinson, 1647-1737), whose works had been published in a collected form in 1748" (p. 68).

We come, therefore, to Mr Watson's connection with it. That he was a Hutchinsonian is evident from the following extract from a letter addressed by him to his friend, Mr Cruickshank of Alloa, on October 27th, 1782\* :—

“ Let me only observe that subordination in Deity to me seems absurd ; and so thinks Tertullian, for I'm convinced I've seen from him *Ex Deo, gradus isti, et species, et nomina Patris Filii et Sp. S. deputantur* which plainly proves Tertullian a Hutchinsonian. I may perhaps be favoured with the correspondence between Dr A[bernethy] and B[ishop] P[etrie] and old Mr Skinner on this head, in which case you may depend on some quotations in course of a future correspondence, if God spares me.”

In this passage he not only glories in the title “ Hutchinsonian,” but he affirms the characteristically Hutchinsonian doctrine that, while there is a Trinity in the Godhead, the use of the word “ Persons ” is to be avoided, and that of “ Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ” abandoned. This is in 1782.

That he was a Hutchinsonian some three or four years later is also pretty clear from the following extract from a sermon preached somewhere about the year 1786. Commenting on the text, “ Let us make man in our Image,” the preacher says :—

The salvation of sinners was the subject of a consultation in the sanctuary of Heaven before the creation of the world. And among whom was this consultation held? Not with the angels, according to the dreams and groundless conceptions of the modern Jews ; for who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Surely with none but *that adorable Deity in Himself, Who, though we cannot comprehend it, we know to exist in Three and these Three to be one incomprehensible Being.* Those, who are skilled in the Hebrew tongue, which may in this respect be styled the language of God, because God taught it to Adam, know that this Oath of Covenant is expressed in the Hebrew Name of God.”

This passage, indeed, as it stands, is perfectly orthodox, but all the same there can be no doubt that in Mr Watson's

\*Cr. MSS. XXII.

mind it was accompanied by the Hutchinsonian gloss. For, first, the extreme dignity ascribed to Hebrew is quite in the Hutchinsonian style; and, secondly, the avoidance of the word Persons in the description of the Trinity is in full agreement with the quotation, which he triumphantly quoted in 1782, from Tertullian, as proving that Father to be a Hutchinsonian.

It is, therefore, clear that Mr Watson belonged to that school of thought. And his letter seems to have troubled Mr Cruickshank, who, on receiving it, applied to his friend, Bishop Rose at Doune, for advice as how best to meet his correspondent's argument. Now that Prelate is known solely as the unbending and forlorn hope of the extreme Jacobites. It is a pleasure, therefore, to exhibit him on the present occasion as having sense and learning sufficient to keep him in the path of sound judgment in the matter of the Hutchinsonian enthusiasm. He replies thus to Mr Cruickshank\* :—

“*From DOUNE, Nov. 25th, 1782.*

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I was favoured with yours of the 7th inst. upon my return home, and have considered it as carefully as I can. As to Mr Watson's quotations from Tertullian, I shall not dispute whether he [i.e. Tertullian] is orthodox or not. It is certain that Tertullian had many *Nostrums*, as doctrines and practices of the Church. I shall mention some of them from Bishop Laurence in his second volume of Lay Baptism, page 46th. [Here follow ten lines of quotation.] As to Mr Watson's quotation from him (Tertullian) it may be just in one respect and not in another. . . . I shall therefore give you quotations from a layman, who writes upon the Athanasian Creed, which I fancy will be a sufficient answer to Tertullian's. I shall transcribe what he says with regard to our belief of the Trinity. [Here follow sixty-eight lines of quotation.] Now you see by this long quotation that there is a distinction of persons everywhere taught in Scripture; but, whatever difference or subordination there may be in this respect, yet with regard to their Divine nature or essence, none is greater nor less than another, which I think is a sufficient answer to Mr Watson's quotation from Tertullian.”

\*Cr. MSS. XXIII.

Mr Cruickshank seems also to have reported Mr Watson's opinions to a still abler man than Bishop Rose, i.e. the Rev. George Gleig of Pittenweem, who, on October 8th, 1783, sent him a long and powerfully argued reply, from which we extract the following<sup>a</sup>:

"As I do not know by what arguments your correspondent supports his notions, I cannot at present combat these arguments. . . . You say he builds his hypothesis on the Hebrew; all who think with him do the same. I, too, know a little of the Hebrew, of which no man alive knows or can know much. I know enough to be able to say with confidence, that, were any man to torture the words and *letters* of any other language, as the words and letters of the Hebrew are tortured by the friends of Mr Hutchinson, he would be as much laughed at by the learned world as Father Harduin(?) was for expecting that the *Æneid* of Virgil was written by the monks of the Dark Ages, and that by *Æneas* was meant the Saviour!"

It was therefore not in vain that Mr Cruickshank had applied to his friends for help against Mr Watson's Hutchinsonian arguments. Both the correspondents, from whom we have quoted, gave him substantial assistance. And here, concerning the answer of Dr Gleig, we may remark in passing that its exceedingly trenchant and lively manner enables us partly to understand why it was that he was so much disliked by the Aberdeen Hutchinsonians. They did not relish having their favourite doctrine so roughly handled by one who was, moreover, only a moderate Jacobite.

In bringing this matter to a conclusion, we must remember in fairness to Mr Watson that he was only twenty-two when he wrote the letter to Mr Cruickshank, and about twenty-five when he delivered the sermon, and that, in accordance with his disposition (which seems always to have led him in the first instance reverentially to follow the lead of his teachers), he was doing no more than reproducing that which had been taught him by his instructor, Dean Skinner, the leader of the Hutchinsonians. We must also remember that neither is his name traditionally associated with Hutchinsonianism, as are those of his preceptor and Bishop Macfarlane, nor has the present writer come across

<sup>a</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVI. (towards end).

any further trace of the peculiar doctrine in question in what he has seen of our hero's subsequent writings. In these circumstances, therefore, we are not justified in supposing that Mr Watson remained an ardent Hutchinsonian throughout his life. Probably the ultimate position which he assumed towards the subject was very much the same as that which Bishop Skinner, the great friend of his later years, took up, of whom Dean Walker says<sup>o</sup>:—

“As was natural, Bishop John Skinner held all his father's special views, though, as is usual with a man of the second generation, his hold of them was

comparatively lax. His son, Bishop William's, hold on them was still laxer, and became more and more so as time and Sanskrit went on sapping their foundations. In fact, neither of these excellent Prelates was of the true Hutchinsonian type. They were of a very practical cast of mind and had nothing in them either of the imaginative or speculative, or of the enthusiasm for Hebrew scholarship, which distinguished the lively Longside Pastor!”

Upon the whole, therefore, the evidence at present forthcoming seems to show that, when he was a young man, Mr Watson started off as an ardent disciple of his preceptor's Hutchinsonianism, but that, as time went on, without formally abjuring it, he allowed the system to fall into the back of his mind and for all practical purposes appeared as a normal Churchman.

<sup>o</sup> “Linshart,” p. 162.

## CHAPTER VII

1783-1786.—CHANGES

FOR some reason or another we are in the habit of supposing that in the good old days there were not such frequent changes amongst the Clergy as occur in modern times. But the glimpse which we obtain of the movements going on in Mr Watson's circle at this period will lead us to modify our opinion on that point:—

First let us take the case of the *Rev. Alexander Cruickshank* of Alloa. Somewhere about February 14th, 1783, the *Rev. William Erskine* of Muthill, who had been *Presbyter* there since the year 1732, and had ministered with great faithfulness, was removed by death. On the 17th therefore *Bishop Rose* writes to *Bishop Petrie*:—

“I was just returned from paying the last duty to Mr Erskine of Muthel; he dyed after a severe and lingering illness and has left a flourishing congregation behind him, which I'm afraid will not easily be supplied; there are few [*i.e.* Clergy] to keep them together, and these few at a considerable distance.”<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty was solved by the living being offered to and accepted by Mr Cruickshank, and thus we have the *Rev. George Gleig* of Pittenweem writing to him as follows on September 10th<sup>2</sup>:—

“I have been thinking of meeting you but did not know till very lately whether I should direct for you at Alloa or at Muthill. I am glad you are settled in the latter place and hope it shall be for the mutual advantage of you and of the congregation.”

The writer then goes on, as having himself recently ministered at Muthill (either in Mr Erskine's declining days, or in the vacancy), to give Mr Cruickshank the benefit of his

<sup>1</sup> C.'s “Argyll,” p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> Cr. MSS. XXV. p 1.

experience there.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, besides entering upon his duties in his new charge, Mr Cruickshank was married not long after, and on February 9th, 1785, Mr Watson wrote to congratulate him in the following terms<sup>4</sup>:—

“(You) are a letter in my debt. But I forgive you—you have married a wife, I’m told. Permit me, therefore, for the first time to congratulate you on your change of life and to wish you and the wife of your bosom much comfort and satisfaction in each other under the matrimonial yoke. Make offer of my best respects to Mrs Cruickshank. Though unknown to her, the friend of her beloved takes this freedom. Many happy years may you both live together.”<sup>5</sup>

Next, how was the vacant charge of *Alloa*, the spot where we first definitely met Mr Watson, filled up?

At first it looked as if the Rev. John Cruickshank were to succeed his cousin there. On July 4th, 1783, he writes to the latter thus<sup>6</sup>:—

“Your favour of the 17th ult. I duly received and the next post brought me Mr Graham’s’ [of Airth, near Alloa] letter [evidently containing a proposal that he should remove to Alloa], upon which I took the first opportunity of laying the matter before Bishop Kilgour [his present Bishop], who had also received a letter from Bishop Rose<sup>7</sup> to the same purpose. He expresses himself straitened with the proposal, but is not to oppose my removal, provided it appears for the Church’s good, or my own convenience, and advises me to take a jaunt to Alloa to be personally acquainted with the state of things. I have therefore resolved to set out on the Monday after the 6th Sunday after Trinity with the view of being at Alloa on the Thursday after and to give worship there and at Airth on the 7th and 8th Sundays after Trinity.”

<sup>3</sup> In an admirable letter printed from Cr. MSS. XXV. in Rev. J. H. Shepherd’s “Episcopacy in Strathearn,” p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX.

<sup>5</sup> For an account of Mr Cruickshank’s long Ministry at Muthill see “Shepherd,” pp. 32-42.

<sup>6</sup> Cr. MSS. XXIV.

<sup>7</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVII.

<sup>8</sup> Alloa was in the Diocese of Fife, but in the vacancy of that See was evidently administered by Bishop Rose of Dunkeld and Dunblane.

He also arranged an interview with Bishop Rose, the acting Diocesan, wrote to Mr Graham of Airth, and provided for sundry other matters, such as a meeting with Mr Cheyne of Stirling; but, after all, the project came to nothing. He was not appointed to the charge.

Mr Alexander Cruickshank therefore approached the Rev. George Gleig on the subject, but that Presbyter replied on October 8th, 1783<sup>9</sup>:—

“I cannot think of quitting the vicinity of S. Andrew’s [i.e. Pittenweem] for Alloa. . . . I love letters and lettered conversation. This I can always have for riding six miles, and it is an advantage which far outbalances in my judgment the difference of stipend.”

On October 30th Bishop Rose writes to Mr A. Cruickshank<sup>10</sup>:—

“Your cousin’s gives me a great deal of pleasure to find that Alloa will be supplied so soon. I shall write Bishop Petrie to send Mr Rhind as soon as possible.”

On December 1st Bishop Petrie writes to the same<sup>11</sup>:—

“I am now happy to find that I can dispense with him [i.e. Mr Rhind] for so desired an end . . . as to serve the good folks in and about Alloa. Of this you may acquaint Bishop Rose, with my respectful compliments, as also that I shall send him up as soon as he chooses to undergo the proper trials amongst yourselves and be put in Orders by him, which I think upon all accounts the best and properest way.”

There is no doubt that Mr Rhind was accordingly settled at Alloa, for on February 9th, 1785, Mr Watson, writing south from Blairdaff to Mr Cruickshank at Muthill says<sup>12</sup>:—

“Best wishes to our friends at Stirling and to Mr Rhind [i.e. their near neighbour at Alloa].

And on March 10th, 1793, he describes Mr Rhind as “one of the two Fife Clergy.”<sup>13</sup>

\* He was ordained Deacon by Bishop Rose at Doune, May 13th, 1784—“Coates Hall” MSS.

<sup>9</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVI. p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVII.

<sup>11</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVIII.

<sup>12</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX.

<sup>13</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXVII.

What came of the *Rev. John Cruickshank*? It seems to me that some family trouble must have befallen him. At all events, writing to his cousin on April 28th, 1787, and after lamenting the long cessation of their correspondence, he goes on <sup>14</sup>:—

“The perplexity of my own affairs hindered me from attending, as I could have wished, to things at a distance. A deadness of course comes upon one on like occasions, which has been very much the case with me, having gradually given up all my correspondence to the necessary attendance on my domestic concerns.”

What was it? He was a married man <sup>24</sup> (XXIV) and can it have been that his wife died? Or was it money difficulties? Meantime, however, he had removed from the united charge of Mansfield and Old Meldrum. We know this from a letter of Mr Watson addressed to Mr Cruickshank at Muthill and dated from Blairdaff on February 9th, 1785, in which he says <sup>15</sup>:—

“You perhaps have seen the lad who succeeded your cousin at Mr Terry’s [the lodgings at Mansfield?]; a little Carlie, clever and brisk and witty and in all probability giving satisfaction, though after such a popular orator as your cousin, the people won’t be easily pleased.”

So far, however, we have not discovered where Mr John was settled, but, as he himself dates a letter to Muthill on April 28th, 1787, “from Ellon,” <sup>16</sup> we may conclude that Ellon was his new charge, and indeed in a Clergy list <sup>17</sup> for 1801 we find the name of John Cruickshank both at Ellon and Turiff.

*Mr Watson* too had the offer of another charge, about which, however, he at least hesitated. On his letter of February 9th, 1785, he says <sup>18</sup>:—

“Since I wrote you last another vacancy has occurred in our Diocese (the only one in it at present, blessed

<sup>14</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXI.

<sup>15</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX.

<sup>16</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXI.

<sup>17</sup> “The British Almanac and Glasgow Register,” 1801. “Scoti-chronicon,” Vol. v. p. 310.

<sup>18</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 3.

be God) occasioned by my friend, Mr Smith at Portsoy, applying for obtaining dimissory letters. He and his young wife sailed for Philadelphia. Some of our brethren, in particular Mr Jolly, wished to have me for his successor; but a prophet has no honour in his own country and perhaps, respecting temporals, the difference might be small. We glory in coming after the primitive standard, but I apprehend in this we clash; that some of us live in affluence and some have food and raiment with difficulty. For my own part, the emoluments of Blairdaff have not put a new coat on my back since I came to it [i.e. about three and a half years ago, in the summer of 1781]. Glory to God, I have more than I deserve and I get to borrow. But this does the Church no good and I foresee will do harm.”<sup>19</sup>

But, although Mr Watson did not remove at once from Blairdaff to Portsoy, as proposed; he received a small additional appointment (without salary) from the newly consecrated Bishop, which must have gratified him. The following extract from the Minutes of the Diocese of Aberdeen will explain what it was<sup>20</sup> :—

“ The Clergy of the Diocese of Aberdeen having represented to the Bishop the desirability of having at least two meetings in the year for receiving the benefit of each other’s advice and transacting such business as came within their departments as Presbyters of the Diocese, the request was granted<sup>21</sup> through the coadjutor by the Bishop and the Reverend Jonathan Watson was appointed ‘ Clerk of the Diocese.’ ”

In this capacity he signed the Minutes of these meetings from their commencement in 1783 until the year 1786.

<sup>19</sup> The Rev. A. Cruickshank describes *his* financial condition thus in 1781\* :—“ Tis true my present expenses in living are not great, yet I assure you my funds are decreasing considerably, yet, Glory to God, I still have had enough and hope in His mercy will never want such a portion of the things of this life as He sees meet for me.” On February 5th, 1750, the Rev. G. Innes of Perth, writes to Bishop Alexander :—“ You see my people are mouldering away, and my finances every day growing lower, and indeed in a little time they are like to be scarce worth notticing. Yet I am better content than I thought I could have been. . . Providence I hope will provide.”—“ Ep. Hist. Perth,” pp. 208-9.

<sup>20</sup> Abdn. Reg.

<sup>21</sup> “ Bp. J. S.,” p. 50.

Mr Watson had another trial to struggle against at this time besides that of an income representing a minus quantity, i.e. his old enemy, illness. He goes on:—

“Considering your former attention after my complaining state of health, I doubt not but you’ll expect to hear how it stands at present. Blessed be God, I have my bodily strength—I eat and sleep pretty well . . . but a continual ‘hauch’ has reduced me to skin and bone. After being seven days from home (five of which I took up in travelling to and from Auchindore, where I officiated the first Sunday in the New Year) I was distressed with a circumstance, which made me suspect that all was over. . . . I said nothing to my mother, but made a journey to Aberdeen and applied to Dr Skene, who declares my leanness and hauching to proceed from a corrupt digestion. My regime is accordingly altered. Elixir of vitriol and stomachic bitters with some other things are prescribed in the meantime, and in summer I’m commanded to drink the waters of Peterhead and to take the cold bath. Whether I live or die, may it be to the glory of God. I beg a share of your prayers.”

\* Cr. MSS. XX.

## CHAPTER VIII

### 1784-6.—THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS

WHILE these changes were taking place amongst the Presbyters, it was evident that the Bishops now presiding over a Church, which was being rapidly transformed into the shadow of a shade, were all, with the exception of Bishop Skinner, ageing and becoming physically unequal to their work. None were more conscious of the fact than themselves. Each one saw in his own Diocese that he must have the help of a younger and more vigorous colleague as co-adjutor.

(a) Thus Falconar, Bishop of Edinburgh, finding himself unable to cope further with the weakness of old age, wrote as follows on January 2nd, 1784, to Bishop Kilgour as Primus<sup>1</sup>:—

“After my writing to you and your Revd. Brethren some months ago, you cannot be ignorant of my infirm situation. Though I have hitherto been able to go through the duties of my office, yet the least of them fatigues me exceedingly. It is therefore necessary that I should have a coadjutor. With this view I have this day called a meeting of my Presbyters, who all, except Mr Cheyne, recommend the Rev. Dr Abernethy-Drummond as the fittest person for this purpose, and they humbly hope from the daily opportunities of being intimately acquainted with his principles and character, that their recommendation with mine will have its proper influence on your Reverence and Right Rev. colleagues.”

However, as we have already seen, Dr Abernethy-Drummond was the opposite of a *persona grata* both to the old-fashioned Jacobites of Aberdeenshire, and also to the Skinners, and the old Primus, who no doubt influenced in the matter by his masterful coadjutor, returned evasive answers, first, on January 7th, and then on January 24th, to his southern colleague's appeals. The result (as we gather from

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XXIX.

the following words of Mr Watson, written to Mr A. Cruickshank, on February 9th, 1785) was that Dr Abernethy-Drummond was not appointed; and that the name of the Rev. A. Allan, concerning whom there was a proposal that he should be elected Bishop of Dunkeld and Dunblane, and allowed to reside in Edinburgh to assist Bishop Falconar, was put aside by the Edinburgh Clergy themselves<sup>2</sup>:—

“It seems the gentlemen of Edinburgh will never yield to receive one of their own number after Dr A. as their Bishop. They have (in case Allan is elected by you as Bishop of Dunkeld and Dunblane) entered a protest against him and vowed not to pay him canonical obedience, if he reside at Edinburgh.”

Bishop Falconar therefore did not get the help he had asked for. He died June 15th, 1784 (“Grub,” p. 91), and things in his Diocese remained as they had been.

(b) As we saw in Chap. v. after the death of George Innes, Bishop of *Brechin*,<sup>3</sup> in 1781, the attempt which was made to find a successor to him in the person of Dr Abernethy-Drummond, had ended in failure owing to the strong prejudice entertained in Aberdeenshire against that excellent but “hasty and resolute” divine. The vacancy still continued, and another effort to fill it was made in 1785. Writing on July 19th to the Rev. P. Torry, who was now at Arradoul in Banffshire,<sup>4</sup> Mr Watson says:—

“I daresay you have heard that Strachan, whom the Brechin Clergy elected, has declared his non-acceptance. They have now elected Bishop Skinner, and this day eight days Bishops Kilgour, Petrie, and he meet at Tillydesk on the subject. Bishop Petrie’s opinion is to confirm the election. Bishop Kilgour is against parting with his coadjutor, and Bishop Skinner himself, I hope, will not accept.”

The upshot was that he did not, and Brechin had to continue vacant.

(c) There was another Bishop, whose health, as we saw in Chap. iv. was in such a parlous state that he too was

<sup>2</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> “Lawson,” p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> Neale’s “Torry,” pp. 5-13.

appealing for the appointment of a coadjutor, and that was Mr Watson's near neighbour at Meiklefolla, Petrie, Bishop of *Moray and Ross*. In his letter of July 19th, 1785, our friend writes<sup>5</sup>:—

“Bishop Petrie has pressed on Bishop Kilgour again and again for a coadjutor, and wishes Mr Jolly for the man.”

But the all-powerful Skinners, father and son, were not only against such men as Dr Abernethy-Drummond and Rev. G. Gleig, but also blocked the way against the Rev. A. Jolly. And, at least in this case, they had reasonable objections to allege, for the nominee was under the canonical age, being only twenty-nine, and might be held to be of too bookish and unpractical a disposition for the Episcopate. Moreover, the elder Skinner, who was the fountain-head of Hutchinsonianism in the Church, might well dislike his anti-Hutchinsonianism and be keen for Mr Macfarlane, of Inverness, who was an ardent disciple of the school.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly Mr Watson draws aside the veil for us and presents us with the following characteristic picture<sup>7</sup>:—

“Honest Mr Skinner [this appears to be the elder Skinner] seated by Bishops Kilgour and Petrie, with each hand on one of their thighs, told them plainly that Mr Jolly was not a fit man; that in all the Dioceses of Aberdeen, Moray and Ross, Mr Macfarlane was the only person, and that, in place of seeking a coadjutor, Bishop Petrie should resign Ross; and Mr Macfarlane should be consecrated Bishop of it. May the Lord direct them that their resolutions may tend to his glory! Bishop S(kinner) is full of this!”

So Bishop Petrie, too, had to go without his coadjutor in the meantime!

(d) We have already seen that the increasing infirmities of the Bishop of *Aberdeen* (Kilgour) himself had rendered the consecration of a coadjutor, in the person of the younger Skinner, necessary. We have now to add that, even with such assistance, the frail old man found himself unequal for

<sup>5</sup> Cr. MSS. LI.

<sup>6</sup> Neale's "Torry," pp. 30-2.

<sup>7</sup> Cr. MSS. LI.

his work. Accordingly, while retaining the office of Primus, he resigned his See in October, 1786,<sup>9</sup> and was succeeded therein by his able and energetic coadjutor.

(e) There was a fifth Bishop also, whose vital energies were on the downward grade. We have seen above<sup>8</sup> that one of the schemes whereby it was proposed to assist old Bishop Falconar of Edinburgh was to have the Rev. A. Allan consecrated to Dunkeld and Dunblane, and to allow him to continue to reside in Edinburgh. That scheme, as we saw, was vetoed by the Edinburgh Clergy themselves. But how came it to pass that people were talking of electing a Bishop of *Dunkeld and Dunblane* at all, when that united See was held by Charles Rose? By the beginning of 1785 he too was beginning to appeal for help, as being unequal to his task, and on June 22nd, 1786,<sup>10</sup> he writes thus from Doune to the Rev. George Skene of Forfar:—

“I wrote to Bishop Kilgour some time ago that I was not able to retain the Dunkeld district. I was first chosen for Dunblane, and afterwards for Dunkeld, and, as it was the most distant, I wanted a coadjutor and told him I designed to do it, after I had ordained Mr Jolly to supply the congregation at Perth, which I intend to do upon S. Peter’s Day, the 29th inst. And, lest Dr Ab—— should interfere in your election, I would advise you to conceal it from him as much as you can, and choose Mr Macfarlane in Inverness, who, I am told, will (be) very acceptable to Bishop Kilgour, and will strengthen the succession rather than by coadjutors. He understands the Earse language and therefore is the properest person for that district; he is a man of exceeding good principles, and you need not be afraid he will not accept.

“Bishop Kilgour wrote me some time ago ‘As your distress renders travelling and fatigue hard upon you, might you not resign and (in) that case ease yourself by resigning the most distant district.’

“As Mr Innes at Perth is in such a way and is incapable of doing anything, that you may not be at a loss to convene your Clergy, I hereby constitute you as Dean of the district of Dunkeld. And, when

<sup>8</sup> “Grub,” Vol. iv. p. 99.

Ch. VIII. (a).

<sup>10</sup> Dunk MSS.

you get an order to elect a Bishop, I hope you will use of your interest for Mr Macfarlane, who, I am informed, will be a very proper person for that office.

“I design immediately after the Ordination of Mr Jolly,<sup>12</sup> to write to Bishop Kilgour and resign the district of Dunkeld and retain Dunblane; as there is but one in that (?)—i.e. Mr Cruickshank.

“Make my kind compliments to Mrs Skeen and your daughter and all your concerns, and commending you all to the Divine Benediction, I am, Rev. Dear Sir,

“Your very affectionate humble servant,  
“CHARLES ROSE.”

“DOUNE, 22nd June, 1786.”

Exactly a week after writing the above the Bishop ordained Mr Jolly Deacon in his Chapel at Doune<sup>11</sup> and sent him to Perth to the aid of Dean Innes, but it was not till October 5th that he actually carried out his resignation of the Diocese of Dunkeld, which, in the meantime, we shall leave vacant.

<sup>11</sup> Dunk. Reg.

<sup>12</sup> i.e. William, not Alexander, Jolly.

## CHAPTER IX

### 1784-5.—THE SEABURY CONSECRATION

IN order to give a connected view of the internal affairs of the Scottish Episcopate at this period, we have carried the narrative on to 1786, but we must now retrace our steps to the year 1784, in order to describe an act of our Bishops, which was of world-wide importance.

The foregoing story, particularly in the last two chapters, has brought vividly home to us how largely ill-health and poverty prevailed amongst all orders of the Scottish Clergy at this period. No doubt these afflictions had come upon them as the consequence of their own and their fathers' inability to accept the Whig Revolution, but even if they were to blame intellectually for a political mistake, yet they are to be regarded with nothing but respect for the single-minded sincerity with which they welcomed suffering on behalf of their principles. And it is ever to be remembered that they regarded themselves as suffering, not only for loyalty to the Stuarts, but also as witnessing for the religious principle of Apostolic Succession. And, just because of their single-minded sincerity, God took them at this pathetic juncture and used them as one of the weak and foolish things of this world, wherewith to confound the strong and the wise. The great Church of England had been far more sagacious in 1689, and had, upon the whole, accepted the Revolution. And she had her reward for this practical sagacity of hers. She continued to be in truth the Church of England. But there is no denying the fact that her subjugation to the Whig regime resulted in a long period of spiritual dryness, and this spiritual dryness led to two calamities, i.e. the alienation of a great part of the people, resulting in the Wesleyan schism, and the almost entire loss from her fold of the American people through the long withholding of the Episcopate from them. But, just as the Church of England had both the reward of her political sagacity and the punishment of her spiritual dryness, so the Scottish Episcopal Church had both the punishment of her want of practical sagacity and the reward of her single-minded sincerity. Whatsoever a man sows, that he also reaps! And so it fell now to her old, frail, tottering Bishops, leaning on the arm of the young

and vigorous Skinner, to do something very notable towards remedying the Church of England's gigantic American mistake! It is a thrice-told tale and therefore it need not be repeated in detail here. Suffice it to say that<sup>1</sup>:—

“Dr Seabury arrived in Aberdeen . . . on Friday, November 5th, 1784. He called on Bishop Skinner next morning, and he appears to have lived with the Bishop most of the time he was in Aberdeen. Bishops Kilgour and Petrie had full confidence in Bishop Skinner's judgment and penetration. Without further hesitation, therefore, they came to Aberdeen at the appointed time and the good work went on. The Consecration took place, as arranged, on Sunday, November 14th, in the large upper room of the house in Longacre, which had till lately been the Bishop's church and home. There was a large congregation of both Clergy and Laity, pervaded by a deep and thrilling interest in the solemnity.”

By this notable act the Anglican Episcopate, which since the Revolution had been “cabined, cribbed, and confined” by Whig politicians, escaped through the one narrow outlet left available, into the open, where it has since flourished exceedingly!

What falls to be recorded in these pages is the attitude which Mr Watson took up with regard to this epoch-making event. Considering his close intimacy with the three consecrating Bishops, and with his neighbour, Mr Jolly,<sup>2</sup> who, “in a pleasing, dreamlike joy,” had been allowed to “hold the book” for the officiating Prelates, it seems probable that he formed one of that “large congregation of Clergy and Laity,” who were present on the great occasion, but there is no actual evidence forthcoming to prove either that he was, or that he was not there. Be that as it may, however, it is certain that he was deeply interested in the event.

And from what point of view did he regard it? The Bishops of Dunkeld (Rose) and Edinburgh (Falconar) were absent from the Consecration. Of the former Mr Watson writes to Mr A. Cruickshank from Blairdaff on February 9th, 1785<sup>3</sup>:—

<sup>1</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” pp. 35-39.

<sup>2</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 2.

“Bishop Rose, good worthy father, did not come to Dr Seabury’s Consecration.”

Neither was it on the plea of illness that these two Prelates, forming the minority of the Episcopal bench, absented themselves. It was on principle. And what principle? That of extreme Jacobitism. Mr Watson distinctly says:—

“Neither does it appear that he [i.e. Bishop Rose] is altogether cordial in the procedure, now that it is over.”

And he gave as his reason that<sup>a</sup>:—

“He had no objection to lay his hands upon this American doctor but one,” namely, “that of his having got his Orders from the schismatical Church of England.”

And doubtless it was the same reason which led Bishop Falconar to return a surly and impatient refusal “to have any concern with that proposal.” Moreover, not only did Mr Watson’s venerated friends, Bishops Rose and Falconar, take this hostile line, but also his well-loved fellow-presbyters, Messrs A. Cruickshank and Cheyne, whom he even suspected of having brought pressure to bear upon the Bishop of Dunkeld and Dunblane to take the line, which he took. He writes thus to Mr Cruickshank<sup>a</sup>:—

“This [i.e. Bishop Rose’s refusal] is thought surprising by many; but is not, sav honestly, the hand of an Ahitophel in all this? Have not you, or Mr Cheyne, prejudiced the Bishop against the measure? Forgive me, if I blame wrongfully. But I did not think there would have been one dissentient voice in those who have not ‘an evil will at Zion.’”

And so we see the Seabury Consecration setting in motion a current, which imperceptibly drew Bishops Kilgour and Petrie, and along with them Messrs Watson and Jolly, a little nearer the moderate Jacobitism of Messrs Abernethy-Drummond and Gleig, and left Bishop Rose and Messrs A. Cruickshank and Cheyne more stranded and alone in their

<sup>a</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 2.

<sup>b</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 29.

<sup>c</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 2.

hyper-Jacobitism—all this, however, without any personal estrangement between Mr Watson on the one side and Bishop Rose and Messrs A. Cruickshank and Cheyne on the other. For he ends up thus':—

“I beg to hear from you in a post or two after this—remember my duty to Bishop Rose—best wishes to our friends at Stirling [i.e. Mr Cheyne and his family] and to Mr Rhind [at Alloa] at convenience, and write me all the news that you or they or any other acquaintance may be concerned with.”

Having thus seen the line taken by Mr Watson with regard to the Seabury Consecration, we can enter into the spirit of exultation with which he writes as follows on February 9th, 1785<sup>1</sup>:—

“The Bishop of All America sails in March from London in the ship *Triumph*, Captain Stout—names, I hope, ominous of success. The Captain is a worthy character, the Doctor's particular friend—a pillar of the Church in New York, and proud of carrying out the Bishop of All America!”

And the Scottish Church sent out at this time, not only Bishop Seabury, but also at least two Clergy. One of these, as we saw in Chap. vii., was Mr Smith, Presbyterian at Portsoy, and now Mr Watson adds<sup>2</sup>:—

“A son of Brown, Seceder Minister at Craigdam below Old Meldrum, sets out for London immediately after Bishop Seabury, with a view of applying for Orders. The lad is engaged to go to Virginia, and wanted to go as a Clergyman, but was refused ordination by

the Scots and English Bishops; the former, however, recommended him to Seabury. I trouble you with this because perhaps you have heard the character of Brown.”

There was, of course, nothing unkind towards young Mr Brown in this conduct either of the Northern or the Southern Bishops. The English Prelates would naturally leave him to be dealt with by the Bishop of Aberdeen, to

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cr. MSS. XXX. p. 2.

whose Diocese he belonged, and the Scottish Bishops, having just consecrated a Bishop for America, were obliged from the point of view of order, to do no more than hand the applicant on with a recommendation to the Bishop, under whom they considered he would serve.

Mr Watson also relates another sequel to the Seabury Consecration, and that was the controversy raised by the publication of Bishop Skinner's sermon preached on the occasion. He makes no reference, indeed, to Mr Gleig's unfortunate onslaught upon its literary style; an onslaught which confirmed the author in his opinion of his critic as a turbulent person, and still further encouraged him to keep him for twenty-two years off the Episcopal Bench,<sup>10</sup> although several times elected; but, in writing to Mr Torry on July 19th, 1785, he does give the following full account of a remonstrance from England. It is to be remembered that Bishop Skinner in his discourse had blamed the Church of England for its excessive dilatoriness in sending a Bishop to America.

Mr Watson says<sup>11</sup>:—

“The Primus [i.e. Kilgour] has lately received a very singular, elegant, and well-polished epistle from England, so far anonymous as that the author only subscribes himself ‘A Dignified Churchman.’ It is couched in the terms of the deepest respect to his Reverence, and seems to be written with the greatest sincerity. After the ice is broken, the author immediately enters on the circumstance of Dr Seabury's Consecration, rejoices at the event, and applauds the conduct of our venerable fathers. He mentions having seen the Consecration Sermon (though he knows not the name of the Right Rev. preacher) and says that he read it with pleasure and regret. His pleasure arose from seeing primitive principles in purity yet in the world; his regret from our Church being an enemy to herself, especially if some sentiments in the sermon were general amongst us. But he hopes ‘that they are not the sentiments of many of our Bishops and Clergy-’ He informs his Reverence that ‘others say that in the sermon

<sup>10</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” pp. 66-70.

<sup>11</sup> Cr. MSS. LI.

the English Bishops are treated with contempt and the British Government insulted.<sup>12</sup> This must be prejudicial to a good work, which he proceeds to relate, namely, that 'many respectable characters in the English Church had long looked on her sister Church in Scotland with an eye of pity and compassion, and had actually formed resolutions of doing her a service at a convenient season. But with what face could they, when the English Bishops are looked upon as so alienated, as the sermon seems to declare?' These are the words, so far as I can remember. A great deal is said, and truly the letter is pretty. Bishop Skinner . . . suspects Dr Berkeley for the writer . . . accordingly he has written to Dr Berkeley and told the whole affair, illustrating and apologising for those sentiments in his sermon with good sense, modesty, and candour. . . . Upon the whole Bishop Skinner thinks that, now we are pointed out by this late occurrence, something is upon the carpet against us."

Commenting upon the foregoing in his "Life of Bishop Torry," p. 9, Dr J. M. Neale remarks:—

"The affair is intelligible enough now. Bishop Lowth of London, the author of the letter, while too honest a man and enlightened a Prelate not to rejoice in the bold step taken at Aberdeen, felt a little natural soreness in the fact that the poor, despised Church of Scotland had ventured on and achieved a feat, which the English Church with all her influence and riches had been unable or afraid to take. The Consecration he could not but praise; the sermon afforded a safe mark for blame; and yet in both, considering the circumstances, it is singularly free from any expression that ought to have given offence, and is a remarkable proof of the moderation of Bishop Skinner."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In a note the Bishop had said that "For a long time the Episcopal Church in Scotland had ventured to show more regard to the Acts of the Apostles than to the Acts of the British Parliaments."—W.'s "Bp. J. S.," p. 63.

<sup>13</sup> See also "Bp. J. S.," pp. 62-66.

## CHAPTER X

### 1786-1788.—THE LAST YEARS OF JACOBITISM

As we saw,<sup>1</sup> Mr Watson had the option of leaving Blairdaff and Auchindore for Portsoy, which was united with Banff,<sup>2</sup> early in the year 1785. At that time, indeed, he did not see his way to make the move, but on May 3rd, 1786, the Minute of the meeting of the Clergy of Aberdeen informs us that in the end he did so. It reads thus:—

“The coadjutor informed them that in consequence of Mr Watson having been removed from Blairdaff to Banff, which rendered it inconvenient for him to execute the duties belonging to his office of Clerk, the Bishop [i.e. Kilgour] had been pleased to appoint Mr Aitken, Presbyter at Aberdeen, clerk in his room.”

He was succeeded at Blairdaff by a Mr Morrison.<sup>2</sup> Banff was one of those many congregations whose places of worship had been ruthlessly destroyed by Cumberland after Culloden. The Rev. G. Innes, writing to Bishop R. Forbes says ‘:—

“At Banff the army destroyed a fine Chappel belonging to the Episcopal Congregation, cutting down the roof, burning the seats, books, pulpit and altar and breaking the organ to pieces.”

But here, as elsewhere, persecution had failed to overcome the faithfulness of the Church:—

“The following remarks (says Dr Craven) of Bailie Stewart of Inverness in 1748, may be applied to all the other congregations of [the North]:—‘We are here in a deprest, confined condition as to the public profession of our religion, though our good worthie pastor does all he can, but I daresay matters will not

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 108.

Abdn. Reg. Ep. Chest 1156-1448.

“Ch. in Moray,” p. 118.

long continue so. Meantime God grant us patience and resignation to his unerring Providence.”

That prayer had been so far answered that there was still a congregation in Banff-cum-Portsoy for Mr Watson to come to in 1786. We should very much have liked to give an account of his Ministry there but the remaining MSS. do not help us in the matter. Along with his removal comes a long gap in his (extant) correspondence. In fact, we have no communication at all from him in his new charge. And, curiously enough, there was at the same time a complete cessation of letters passing between the cousins Cruickshank. On April 28th, 1787, John, writing from his new charge of Ellon to Alexander, says<sup>5</sup>:—

“ ’Tis a very long while now since I had the pleasure of writing you, or hearing from you; what may have been the cause I will not take upon me to say; perhaps there has been some want on both sides, though the greater part of the blame certainly lies on me.”

Whatever the reason may have been, the post offices at Muthill, Ellon, and Banff were not used by the friends nearly so much as had been those of Alloa, Mansfield, and Blairdaff.

The one piece of information about the Banff Ministry which we possess is that Mr Watson found himself there confronted by an “English,” or “Qualified” congregation,<sup>6</sup> the Pastor of which was the Rev. Charles Cordiner.

Notwithstanding, however, the meagreness of our knowledge in this direction, we may be sure that certain events, which happened in the Church in connection with friends of his own must have interested our Presbyter deeply at this period.

It will be remembered that at the end of Chapter VIII we left the *Diocese of Dunkeld* unoccupied after the resignation of Bishop Rose in October, 1786. An attempt was now made to fill up the vacancy, which must have enlisted Mr Watson’s most earnest attention, because he was deeply interested in the careers of two of those who became implicated in the matter. The whole affair also had the most important bearing upon his own fortunes, as will become apparent later on.

<sup>5</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXI.

<sup>6</sup> “Annals,” pp. 242-246.

In September 1786, a mandate<sup>7</sup> signed by Bishops Kilgour, Rose, and Petrie was issued from which we quote the following:—

“As the Rev. Mr George Skene at Forfar, your Dean, has by a letter under his hand applied to the Primus for a Mandate, We, the subscribing Bishops of the Church of Scotland Do by these Presents authorize and empower you to meet and elect some worthy Person fit to take charge of said District or Diocese.”

Accordingly a meeting of the electors was held at Shealhill, Kirriemuir, at which Dr Abernethy-Drummond was unanimously elected. In his reply<sup>8</sup> of October 11th to Mr Skene, however, that divine wrote thus:—

“The honour you have done me after so many attempts by our superiors to discredit me with my brethren penetrates my heart with such a lively sense of gratitude as no time shall obliterate, and I have only to regret that, great as the obligation is which your election lays upon me, I cannot gratify you in your request for many reasons which it is needless to unfold. Suffice it to say that you all know how ill I stand with those who rule over us. . . . At<sup>9</sup> first I had a right to struggle for the justification of my character and the support of the common rights of the Presbyterate; but, both these being sufficiently vindicated by what has been already done by my friends and brethren in Edinburgh and Brechin districts, not to mention the late Bishop Falconar, nothing now remains but that I sit down in silence and endeavour to serve the Church to the best of my abilities in the humble station [in which] Providence has placed me.”

The electors then made choice of the Rev. James Lyall of Kirriemuir but the Dean received a reply<sup>9</sup> dated October 9th, 1786, from that Presbyterian from which we quote the following:—

“At the best time of my life I could not think myself nearly equal to such a weighty charge, far less now with one foot in the grave and the other foot following

<sup>7</sup> Dunk. MSS.

<sup>8</sup> Dunk. Reg.

<sup>9</sup> Dunk. MSS.

it. You will therefore accept this as a proper resignation."

The Rev. George Gleig of Pittenweem was next elected and wrote a letter of acceptance, from which we quote the following:—

"For this delay I can plead no other apology than the fluctuating state of my own mind, which resolved upon one thing one day and changed that resolution on the morrow; which sometimes flattered me with the hopes that, if a Bishop, I might from my connections be useful to the Church, and which as often presented to my imagination nothing in that station but wretchedness to myself. The opportunities of my too partial friends have prevailed and I have at last resolved to acquiesce in your election."

On Monday in Easter Week 1787, however, he again wrote<sup>10</sup> as follows:—

"You probably know, in consequence of a letter of mine in answer to one from your Dean, that objections were unexpectedly started to my promotion by Bishop Skinner. Although many letters have passed between his Reverence, the Primus, and myself on the subject, I do not even yet know what these objections are;<sup>11</sup> but, as I am conscious of my own unworthiness; as the Bishop appears to be extremely averse to receiving me as his colleague; and as the Episcopate is an honour of which I never was ambitious, and which I should feel as a very heavy burden, you will have the goodness to accept of my resignation of all claims to that dignity, to which your partial suffrages had elected me."

The following comments, which he proceeds to make on Bishop Skinner's conduct, are self-restrained and dignified, and afford us the satisfaction of knowing that the misunderstanding between these two leading men was not allowed to degenerate into personalities:—

"That Bishop Skinner has acted at present from what to him appears a good motive I have no doubt; it would

<sup>10</sup> Dunk. MSS.

<sup>11</sup> "On account of some expressions in a late publication of his entitled 'An apology for the Church of Scotland.'"—W.

be ridiculous to suppose a man of sense in his station and in such a Church as ours acting otherwise; but, conscious to myself of being an honest man, I must have leave to think that the fears, at which he hints, are totally groundless and that the principle of his conduct, tho' sincere, is a mistaken one. Still, however, as *sincerity* is all that is required of man by his Maker, it is surely all that we can expect from our superiors; and therefore everything, which may be construed into an affront offered by his Reverence to me, I sincerely and cordially forgive, and I trust that you, who have not been affronted, will be equally ready to pardon the injury done to your right of election."

With the possibility of a long vacancy in the Diocese before them he adds:—

"Let me, however, request you to make *some* choice and to make it *speedily*, for, if all our Bishops shall be inhabitants of the other side of the Dee or at a great distance from the Metropolis, I shall tremble for the consequences. An evil threatens us, of which our superiors can have no idea, more formidable than persecution; and, if it can be averted at all, it can only be by a regular Bishop residing in the south of Scotland, whose learning and acquaintance with the world are such as to teach him when to yield and when to display firmness."

Notwithstanding this exhortation, no more attempts at election were now made, and the Diocese was still allowed to remain vacant.

Next there was the passing away of Mr Watson's former much-revered neighbour, Bishop Petrie, in the fifty-sixth year of his age and the eleventh of his Episcopate. We have an account of the occurrence in a MS. letter<sup>12</sup> of the Rev. John Cruickshank to his cousin, dated April 28th, 1787, in which he says:—

"But why so long a preamble to the awful subject which is the occasion of this trouble! Good Bishop Petrie has ailed much for six or seven weeks past; about ten days ago his distress came on with greater

<sup>12</sup> For further details see "Ch. in Moray," p. 127.

violence and has now, alas! brought him to the end of his course. He departed this life yesternight about ten-thirty. Mr Jolly and I were the melancholy witnesses of the death of our Elijah. O may some portion of the spirit, that was in him, be added to us! *Et ipse requiescat*, etc.! Great is the loss to me; great must it be to many an individual; but how heavy will it be to the Church, to our miserably divided and distracted society! I have communicated the intelligence of this melancholy event to all the Bishops but Bishop Rose, whom you will acquaint. I have also written a few lines to Mr Alex. Allan. While we regret our loss, let us think of his virtues and rejoice in his great gain!"

In the course of his memorial sermon the Rev. A. Jolly said of him<sup>13</sup>:—

"He went about doing good, journeying unweariedly and without consideration of his bodily health, carried on beyond his strength by the love he had to the interests of Christ's spiritual Kingdom. If that went well, he rejoiced in the midst of pain and bodily weakness. If any detriment or hurt seemed to threaten the Church, no outward thing could make him cheerful. Indeed, the pleasures of the body he had so entirely got above that I am very apt to think such a thorough conquest of them has rarely been seen in these latter times."

He was succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Macfarlane,<sup>14</sup> Presbyterian since 1770, at Inverness; an ardent Hutchinsonian after Skinner of Linshart's own heart, but a man of energy and ability; a good Gaelic and Hebrew scholar, and an active itinerant pastor. He had been elected by the Clergy of Moray and Ross and consecrated as coadjutor about six weeks before the Bishop died.

Thirdly, seeing that the state of affairs in Perth, as revealed in the joint letter from the Revs. G. Skene of Forfar, and the Rev. J. Lyall of Kirriemuir, to the Primus, dated May 1st, 1787, was the outcome of Mr Watson's own decision in 1781, to settle at Blairdaff rather than in the fair city, there can be no doubt that he was deeply interested in it. The MS.<sup>15</sup> runs as follows:—

<sup>13</sup> "T. S.," p. 408.

<sup>14</sup> For whom see "Ch. in Moray," pp. 128 and 251. "T. S.," p. 407

<sup>15</sup> Dunk. MSS.

“RIGHT REV. FATHER IN GOD,—As we are just now deprived of a Bishop [Diocese of Dunkeld] and there is yet no appearance of that essential want being supplied, We, the Clergy of this district, are under the necessity of troubling you with the following case: Mr Wm. Jolly, who was some time ago put into Deacon's Orders with a view to supply the congregation of Perth, destitute by Mr Innes's age and valetudinary state, has officiated there for some time, but, not being collated to that charge, and finding his situation not agreeable, he proposes leaving it. And, as the congregations of Kerrymuir and Cortachy are earnestly desirous to have an assistant to Mr Lyall, who from age and infirmity finds himself unable to do his duty, they could consent if Mr Lyall have made choice of Mr Jolly as their clergyman, and have desired us to apply your Reverence to admit him into the Order of Presbyter, and collate him to Kerrymuir.

“This settlement is the more necessary and urgent from the circumstance that, besides its being double the number and more, there is a small farm and commodious steading, which Mr Lyall had and has very much improven; this was a considerable part of his subsistence, but falls for ever if he gets not an agreeable assistant and successor, and therefore we hope you will allow this circumstance to have its proper weight. If it should be alledged that hereby the Perth congregation is in the hazard of being lost by Mr Jolly's translation, the answer is, if a much greater is in the same, if not more, imminent danger if he is not translated.

“Mr Jolly is very willing and desirous to give the Perth folks all the supply in his power thro' the summer season, untill we see if a young man casts up and has of himself been inquiring and has discovered a young man just now in a gentleman's family in Fife, of the name of Low, who will be applied to, but whether he accepts we know not.

“But, as Mr Jolly is agreeable both to Mr Lyall and the congregations of Kerrymuir and Cortachy, members of which are the Countess of Airlie, Lady Clova, and Mrs Lyall of Kinordy, we hereby humbly and earnestly intreat if you will order him up, either

to Aberdeen or Peterhead, put him into Priest's Order and translate him from Perth and collate him to Kerrymuir.

"We cannot help regretting our desolate state and great want of Episcopal Offices. We commend our situation to your consideration and pity, and ourselves and flocks to your benediction and prayers."

That estrangement between Bishop Skinner and the Rev. George Gleig, the two strongest and ablest, and amongst the most devoted and loyal members of the Church, which was so great a misfortune in its present depressed condition, broke out afresh at the present juncture.<sup>16</sup> After his rejection for Dunkeld, Mr Gleig paid a visit to London and began on his own account to put out feelers in influential quarters there with a view to ascertaining whether anything could be done in the direction of repealing the penal laws. Now it so happened that Bishop Skinner also was engaged in exactly the same quest, only by correspondence. His scheme, however, of which we may be pretty sure that Mr Watson was cognizant, inasmuch as it "was communicated to many of the inferior Clergy,"<sup>17</sup> did not contemplate the requirement of praying for King George by name. Jacobitism, indeed, as an active cause was quickly passing away, but the Bishop probably thought, and that very truly, that, so long as Prince Charlie lived it was useless to expect that the Clergy, who had suffered so much for his sake could be brought openly to renounce their allegiance to one whom they loved so romantically.

Certainly Bishop Rose, at least, was not to be moved. Writing on June 22nd<sup>18</sup> to Mr Skene of Forfar, that Prelate said:—

"I return you thanks for the trouble you have been at in transcribing the Aberdeen's Deliberations. It mightily surprizes me how they could take upon them to make such Resolutions. I had a copy of them before you sent me yours. They have all originated from Mr Skinner a(t) Linshart, who, you know, prayed in express terms for——. And I doubt not but he wants us to address the Government to repeal the penal statutes against us, and

<sup>16</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 72. "Bp. Gleig," pp. 201-5.

<sup>17</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 202.

<sup>18</sup> Dunk. MSS.

subscribe ourselves his loyal subjects. I heartily approve of the answer you made to Aitken, and will be glad if they send their Declaration to you. I cannot conceive what it will be. I don't think they will get many to join them in it; at least, all I have conversed (with) upon the subject, look upon it as giving up all principle."

So wrote Bishop Rose, as it were upon Bishop Skinner's extreme right. But to Mr Gleig, moving about in London, a Repeal Bill which did not include "nominal prayers," appeared preposterous; and he seems to have expressed himself pretty freely upon such a project. The result was that Bishop Skinner thought he was being counter-worked by the Presbyter, and the Presbyter that he was being counter-worked by the Bishop. The personal unfriendliness of these two good and powerful men was therefore increased, and the project of repeal in the meantime wrecked.

The fifth event, which must have interested Mr Watson during the time of his Ministry at Banff, was the filling up of the Diocese of Brechin by the appointment of one with whom he had had some personal intercourse. The See, vacant since the death of Bishop Innes in 1781, and, despite various efforts<sup>19</sup> which had been made to fill it by fruitless elections of Dr Abernethy-Drummond, Rev. John Strachan, and Bishop Skinner, vacant still, was now at last filled by the consecration<sup>20</sup> of Dr Abernethy-Drummond and the Rev. J. Strachan, one of the Dundee Clergy, as respectively Bishop and coadjutor. The office was performed at Peterhead on September 26th, 1787, by Bishops Kilgour, Skinner, and Macfarlane.

Sixthly, Bishop Falconar of Edinburgh, who, as we have seen, had long been pleading for a coadjutor,<sup>21</sup> died in June, 1784 and no sooner had the double consecration for Brechin taken place than the Clergy of Edinburgh elected Bishop Abernethy-Drummond as their Diocesan and that Prelate was translated thither.<sup>22</sup>

Seventhly on his chief's collation to Edinburgh, the mild and gentlemanly coadjutor, Bishop Strachan, succeeded to the vacancy caused in Brechin.

<sup>19</sup> Chap. viii.

<sup>20</sup> "Lawson," p. 334. "T. S.," p. 411.

<sup>21</sup> Chap. viii. (a).

<sup>22</sup> "T. S.," p. 413.

One more Episcopal change took place in the following year.<sup>23</sup> The now frail and feeble Kilgour, who had been consecrated in 1768, and "whose tenure of office will ever be memorable for the consecration of Bishop Seabury," resigned the office of Primus in December, 1788, and the youthful and vigorous Skinner was chosen to fill his place in that capacity also.

Through the changes just recorded the College of Bishops was now constituted thus:—Bishop of Aberdeen and Primus, *John Skinner*; Moray, *Andrew Macfarlane*; Edinburgh, *Dr Abernethy-Drummond*; Dunblane, *Charles Rose*, and Brechin, *John Strachan*. So re-constituted it was a much stronger and more efficient body of rulers than the Church had possessed for some years.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 78. "Grub," Vol. iv. p. 99.

<sup>24</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 79.

## CHAPTER XI

### 1788.—DEATH OF PRINCE CHARLIE AND PRAYERS FOR KING GEORGE

It was fortunate for the Church that there was at this juncture an infusion of new blood into the Synod of Bishops. For 1788, the hundredth year since the Revolution, was marked by an event of capital importance for the afflicted Church. Let us learn what it was and wherein lay its significance from the heartfelt and moving address to his people, the issue of which was the last act of Bishop Falconar,\* before he made way for Bishop Abernethy-Drummond in the See of Edinburgh. The MS.<sup>1</sup> runs as follows:—

“Honoured and well-beloved in our Lord, as it hath pleased God to remove from this world (I hope to an infinitely better) the undoubted heir of our antient sovereigns, you must be sensible that the Church in this country is placed by that event in a more critical situation than she has experienced since the Revolution; and, as we know by dear-bought experience that the frowns of Government have well-nigh destroyed her existence, five hundred and fifty Clergymen at least having died and got no successors; if she remains in the same unhappy circumstances for a very few years longer, there will not be a vestige of an Episcopal Church in Scotland.”

The MS. then goes on at length to enlarge upon the self-sacrifice made by the Church on behalf of the Stuarts; to declare that this self-sacrifice would be continued, if necessary; but affirms that Prince Henry, by having become Bishop of Frascati and a Cardinal, is not *sui juris*; that, having done nothing to free himself from being “the Pope’s man,” he has no claim on the allegiance of the nation; that the King of Sardinia has voluntarily renounced whatever claims he possessed, and that therefore nothing is left but to acknowledge the Hanoverians. The Bishop proceeds:—

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXII. addressed “To the Lay Members of the Diocese of Edinburgh.”

\* A mistake. Bishop Falconar died in 1784. Author of MS. unknown.

“If the Governors of the Church neglect to make the experiment, now that they lawfully may (and are, I think, in duty bound to do it), much they will have to answer for, because the speedy ruin of Episcopacy in this country will undoubtedly be the fatal consequence, and, as we believe it to be a Divine institution, duty and conscience, and every tie that is sacred, obliges us to labour by every honest means for its preservation. This, nothing but the smiles of Government can, without a miracle, effect. For, for want of that, the number of the Clergy have been diminished two-thirds since I entered into Holy Orders, and, if this opportunity is lost of receiving some countenance from the Civil Powers, I mean some protection and toleration, whereby the friends of the Church may be encouraged to attend her ministrations, a very few years will elapse, when in all probability there will not be a vestige of a regular Episcopacy in Scotland, as before observed, but an absolute famine of the Word and Sacraments take place in this, our antient Church.

“During the short remainder of my days I have nothing of this kind to fear, and, therefore, although the same adversity should continue to terminate my days as a Clergyman, under which they begun, as far as I am personally concerned, is no great matter, nor on my own account is a change worth struggling for. On the contrary, were I to consult my reputation among many well-meaning and good people, whose esteem I have long enjoyed and very much value, I should certainly sit down in silence and take no active hand in this Revolution. But, as it is my duty to labour for posterity, conscience obliges me to get up and be doing, lest children yet unborn, for not being regularly initiated into Christ’s mystical Body, shall have cause to curse the day when I and other such useless drons became governors of God’s Church in this country, who, having possessed the power of saving her, yet suffered her to perish through a criminal timidity of offending prejudiced friends, or a fond attachment to a family, which, though formerly a duty, while they kept themselves in a condition of receiving our allegiance at all times, now ceases to be obligatory, through the default of the present heir.

“Let me add that by complying at this time, we shall remove one great cause of difference, which has always divided us from our fellow-subjects and shall put an end also to a disputed succession, which has long been the misfortune of this country and brought many respectable families to utter ruin.

“I pray God to direct us all to what is best for His glory and our own spiritual good!

In a P.S. the writer argues that, because the Pope has allowed the Romanists to pray for King George, it must be concluded that Prince Henry, as being on His Holiness's Privy Council in the capacity of a Cardinal, must be assumed to have agreed to that Act, since he has issued no protest against it, and that consequently they have the Prince's own permission to recognise the Powers that be!

Such was the manifesto of the aged Bishop (anonymous) to the Church in the south, and Mr Watson could not escape by merely living in the north, at Banff, from being compelled to come to a decision on the problem set forth in the address. He had begun, as we saw in Chapters II and III, as belonging to the hyper-Jacobite school of Bishop Rose; and he could not fail to know that that Prelate, who had won his earliest reverence, was still unbending in his lifelong loyalty to the Stuarts. How, then, was he to decide? He was helped to a conclusion by the previous wise policy of Bishop Skinner. For that Prelate had not only been the moving spirit in the revival of the clerical meetings in the Diocese of Aberdeen, but with far-seeing eye had from the first used those assemblies for the discussion of appropriate topics, whereby to prepare the minds of the Clergy to acquiesce in a change of political allegiance, so soon as the impending death of Prince Charlie should take place.

When, therefore, that event had actually occurred<sup>a</sup> :—

“At a [Diocesan] Synod held at Linshart by the Right Rev. Bishop Skinner on April 9th, 1788, his Reverence . . . said it now appeared necessary to consider, as the only means of relief . . . whether and to what degree a compliance might be made with the established Government. The Clergy having (considered the proposal) are unanimously of opinion that, as there now appears no claim to the crown of Great Britain more valid than that of the Prince at present in possession of it, they are so far satisfied

<sup>a</sup> Ep. Chest 1156, and Abdn. Reg.

as to think themselves at liberty to pray by name for him and the Royal Family, if such a measure shall appear to the Bishops of the Church (or a majority of them) to be the most expedient for obtaining that relief, of which she stands so much in need.”

Now Mr Watson, who had not ceased to attend these meetings, even although his removal to Banff had led to his resignation of the clerkship, was present on this occasion, and, along with twelve others, signed the above resolution.

In taking this important step they were not singular. Bishop Rose, indeed, with pathetic consistency, held out to his last breath. And, writing from Doune on May 10th, 1788, addressed the following letter to Bishop Strachan ‘:—

“RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Your letter from Aberdeen of the 26th surprises me not a little, for it is not in my power to comply with my brethren. I wrote the Primus twice and he did not answer one of them [*sic*], which you would probably see that it was my fixed resolution not to alter my method. I shall keep it to myself. And it will be to no purpose to send any of the Clergy here, for it will be to no manner of purpose. For, if I did comply, it would not be in my power to live in this place. I shall not give myself the trouble to answer Mr Skene’s letter, for I think he took too much upon him to write me.”

And not only so, but he actually went so far as single-handed to consecrate the Rev. James Brown, of Montrose,<sup>4</sup> at Doune to the Episcopate, in the hope of continuing a Non-juring succession.<sup>5</sup> Concerning this event Bishop Skinner writes as follows<sup>7</sup>:—

“That Report is confirmed by a letter I had since from Bishop Strachan, who writes me . . . that the information was given by Brown himself to Mr John Allan. . . . But now the Bishops must determine what is to be done. . . . As to declaring

<sup>4</sup> Ep. Chest 1:66.

<sup>5</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Brown afterwards ordained a Mr Mackintosh, for information concerning whom see the *Episcopal Magazine*, Vol. iv. p. 190, 1836; and a sketch of his life by the Rev. W. M. Tuke. Mr Mackintosh’s library is still preserved at Dunkeld.

<sup>7</sup> Ep. Chest 1385.

Bishop Rose *non compos*,<sup>9</sup> or reduced to such a state of weakness as to be incapable of discharging the duties of the Episcopal Office, I have no objection and wish it had been done sooner, since, if it had not prevented, it would at least have rendered Mr Brown's application to him more absurd and ridiculous."

He then goes on to discuss whether it would be better to depose Mr Brown from the Episcopate or merely to declare his consecration schismatical, and decides in favour of the latter course. He adds that soon after his consecration Bishop Brown actually paid him a visit in Aberdeen, but, without making any allusion to what had occurred, left the room so hurriedly that the Primus had no opportunity of broaching the subject.

A protest against praying for King George was also sent to Bishop Skinner by three Edinburgh Laymen,<sup>9</sup> and, as the following extracts from a letter of Bishop Strachan to Bishop Skinner show, there was also some trouble amongst certain of our friends of the Clergy<sup>10</sup>:—

"Mr Cruickshank too stands out and declares that all the arguments that have yet been used to invalidate the C[ardinal]'s right . . . appear to him very futile and inconclusive. Mr Robb, too, has scruples, and likewise Messrs Rhynd and Lindsay.

"P.S.—Mr Cruickshank had his scruples soon removed and complied in a few weeks."

But, notwithstanding this natural reluctance on the part of some to reverse the policy endeared to them by the memories of their early years, and by the habits of a life-time:—

"On<sup>11</sup> Thursday last (August 24th, 1788) was held at Aberdeen a meeting of the Protestant Bishops in Scotland with representatives from the Clergy of their Districts, who, after taking into serious consideration the state of the Church under their jurisdiction, resolved to give an open and public proof of their submission to the present Government

<sup>9</sup> Ep. Chest 1164-5.

<sup>10</sup> Ep. Chest 1166.

<sup>11</sup> Ep. Chest 1161.

by praying in express words for H.M. King George and the Royal Family, which is to take place in all their Chapels on Sunday, May 25th next; to which day it is deferred that the Bishops may have time to give proper direction to their Clergy throughout the Kingdom for that purpose. Thus an end is put to those unhappy divisions, which long distracted this kingdom, and we have the satisfaction to think that many thousands of our countrymen, who have hitherto been suspected of disaffection to the present Government, will now be considered as loyal and obedient subjects."

And this resolution, despite the forlorn loyalty of poor, failing Bishop Rose; the indignation of the Laird of Gask, particularly against Mr Cruickshank, and the pathetic distress of many a groaning worshipper,<sup>12</sup> was universally carried out.

In reply to an address, suitable to the occasion; which had been forwarded to London, there came the following answer<sup>13</sup> :—

" WHITEHALL, *June 28th*, 1788.

" His Majesty received with great satisfaction this proof of your attachment to his Person and Family."

<sup>12</sup> W.'s " Bp. Jolly," p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Ep. Chest 1163.

## CHAPTER XII

### 1788-1792.—REPEAL OF THE PENAL LAWS

As we have seen, the attempts made by Bishop Skinner and the Rev. G. Gleig to procure the repeal of the penal laws in 1786, came to nothing. So long as Prince Charlie was alive any such endeavour, even had there been no personal misunderstanding between its two advocates, was bound to fail, inasmuch as nominal prayers for King George could not then have been acquiesced in by an influential section of the Church. But, now that the last of the effective Stuarts was gone and the nominal prayers had been accepted with practical unanimity, the case was different. An application to Government was hopeful.

A full narrative of the proceedings in connection with it is to be found in Dean Skinner's (of Forfar) "*Annals of Scottish Episcopacy*," which consists of his father's (the Bishop of Aberdeen's) contemporary record of the event; and, as Mr Watson was both deeply interested in all that occurred and actually took part in promoting the success of the negotiations, it is necessary to give an account of the movement here. Since, however, it was open to the Presbyter of Banff only to play a very subordinate part in the matter, we will content ourselves with referring the reader, who wishes for fuller information, to the pages of Skinner,<sup>1</sup> and giving no more than the briefest survey of the transactions.

About Easter, 1789, the Bishops agreed that Bishop Skinner, who was now Primus, and Bishops Abernethy-Drummond and Strachan should go up to London and do all that was possible to procure the passing of a Repeal Bill through Parliament. The three Prelates faithfully performed their commission, and at first everything looked promising.

<sup>1</sup> See also Dean Walker's "*Life of Bishop Skinner*," pp. 122-137. "*Grub*," Vol. iv. pp. 102-107. "*T. Stephen*," Chap. lxxv. "*Lawson*," Vol. ii. pp. 337-341. "*W. Stephen*," Vol. ii. pp. 551-3. Farquhar's "*Episcopal History of Perth*," pp. 225-232. Skinner's "*Annals*," pp. 73 to 242.

Thurlow, the Lord Chancellor, however, proved to be the evil genius of the piece. His vanity was wounded on account of the Bishops paying more court to Pitt, the Prime Minister, than to him; he never gave his attention to understand the point at issue, and his mind was prejudiced with the most extravagant Erastian notions, insomuch that he could never even conceive the idea of a purely ecclesiastical Episcopate. And the result was that it was considered more prudent to withdraw the proposed Bill on September 29th than to arouse his uncompromising hostility.

On the Bishops' return to Scotland, the Primus, on November 11th, 1789, summoned a Convention at Laurence-kirk, which was attended both by Clergy and Lay representatives.<sup>2</sup> To this assemblage the Primus gave a full account of the transactions which had taken place in London. The three Bishops were thanked, and a Committee of Bishops, Clergy, and Laity was appointed to continue the attempt, everything being now done to pave the way for a more successful Bill in 1790. In particular, great efforts were made to propitiate the surly Thurlow. All, however, was in vain. The powerful Chancellor's obstinacy and ignorance prevailed once more and the Bill did not go through.

It was at this point that Mr Watson appeared in the matter.

"The Synod of Aberdeen," says Dean Walker,<sup>3</sup> "met on August 18th, 1790, and the Bishop laid before it an account of all the steps that had been taken during last session by himself and his co-committee men. Thereafter the Synod adjourned till six o'clock in the evening. 'In the interim a Presbytery was constituted which consisted of' (fifteen clergymen, whose names are given); and who, after considering the information communicated to them by the Bishop, unanimously passed a resolution 'approving of the measures of the Committee,' thanking them for 'their zeal and assiduity,' expressing full confidence in them and recommending to them 'to solicit the aid of such noblemen and gentlemen, as had the interest of the Church at heart,' etc., especially the Earl of Kelly. The resolution was moved by Mr Watson and seconded by Mr Torry."

<sup>2</sup> For the significance of this Assembly with regard to the powers of the Laity, see my "History of the Lay Claims," p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 115.

It was at once communicated to all the other Dioceses and:—

“ Thus the Aberdeen Clergy continued to stir up their brethren and draw out support to the good cause from every Diocese of the Church.”

Accordingly the year 1791 saw a renewal of the campaign, but its history was exactly the same as that of 1790, and ended in the wreck of the Bill on the same rock as before.

However, the indomitable Bishop Skinner proceeded again to London, and, amid the formal kindness of the English Bishops, secured the active and whole-hearted support of Bishop Horsley. In order to evade the hostility of Thurlow, certain undesirable and unreasonable elements, such as the oath of abjuration, the necessity of signing the Thirty-nine Articles (for why should the State impose an elaborate theological formula, however excellent, upon any religious body?) and the veto on Scottish ordained Clergy ministering in England, were introduced. And thus at last on May 2nd, 1792, the penal laws, which had so long oppressed the Scottish Bishops and their flocks, were repealed.

Almost the very day after the passing of the Bill, hampered by the restrictions required by Lord Thurlow, that worthy, having tried to treat a Bill of Pitt's in the same way as he had treated that of Bishop Skinner, was hurled from power!

## CHAPTER XIII

### 1792.—LAURECEKIRK—MARRIAGE—THE BISHOPRICK OF DUNKELD

THE early nineties were most important, not only in the history of the Church, but also in Mr Watson's life. For a very gratifying and unexpected gift had just been made to the Scottish Bishops, the nature of which will appear from the following quotation from a letter written by Lord Gardenston to Bishop Abernethy-Drummond on February 9th, 1790:—

“ I have perused and considered your letter of 29th January last with much satisfaction. It is written, I think, in the true spirit and character of a Christian Pastor, without guile or partial motives. Though bred a Presbyterian, I have ever revered the order and decency of the Episcopal Church; and, as I have declared to you and to others of your communion my deliberate resolution, now that you have publicly conformed to the revolution system and establishment of government, to endow and establish a Scotch Episcopal Church in my village of Laurecekirk; and as I am old and valetudinary, I am anxious to make this resolution without delay and for that purpose by this my obligatory missive to you, as a leading member of that Church, I oblige and bind myself, my heirs and successors in my lands and estates in the County of Mearns to make this establishment a real and perpetual burden on my said estates in proper and ample form hereafter<sup>1</sup>:—

<sup>1</sup> Appendix to the constitution of S. Laurence Church, Laurecekirk.  
See also MSS. 820 in Ep. Chest.

And, following upon this generous gift, Lord Gardenston wrote to Mr Watson on December 4th, 1790:—

“REVEREND SIR,—Having some time ago in a letter to the worthy Bishop Abernethy-Drummond established at my village of Laurencekirk a settlement, and what I think a competent living for a Clergyman of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and being well assured of your talents as a preacher and of your merit as a man of integrity and good manners, I hereby nominate, appoint and present you as the first Incumbent of that living.”<sup>2</sup>

The “competent living” consisted of £40 a year; a victual stipend of forty bolls of wheat together with “a commodious manse with a piece of garden-ground adjoining, and a glebe not less than three acres of enclosed ground,” and on May 11th, 1791, the Bishop of Aberdeen informed his Synod<sup>3</sup> of the above particulars and also of the fact that Mr Watson had closed with the offer made to him.

The next entry under the date, August 24th, 1791, carries the matter a step further:—

“The Bishop acquainted the Synod that Mr Watson, Presbyter at Banff, had in consequence of his presentation from Lord Gardenston, been collated to Laurencekirk, so that he was no longer a Presbyter of the Diocese of Aberdeen, and that in consequence of an application from the congregations of Banff and Portsoy, Mr Watson’s former Cures, and of the recommendations of the Clergy of this Diocese, the Bishop had collated his son, the Rev. John Skinner, Presbyter at Montrose, to be Pastor of these congregations.” [He afterwards was Incumbent of Forfar and Dean of Dunkeld.]

And the Brechin Register of August 31st, 1791, shows us the matter concluded:—

“Agreeable to appointment, a meeting of the Clergy of this district was held here (i.e. Stonehaven) this day.  
... The Rev. Jonathan Watson from the Diocese

<sup>2</sup> For an account of the congregation at Laurencekirk and Bishop Strachan. see F.’s “Laurencekirk,” pp. 247-252.

<sup>3</sup> Abdn. Reg.

of Aberdeen appeared and showed his letters of collation to Laurencekirk."

Our Presbyter was thus now under the jurisdiction of Bishop Strachan. (Chapter x end)

We next come to his marriage. That he did take unto himself a partner there is no doubt, because his daughter, Miss Watson, lived on till within the memory of several who are yet with us.

Who, therefore, was his wife? Miss Moir, now (1912) residing at Newport in Fife, the granddaughter of Bishop Moir of Brechin (who, as we shall see, was one of Mr Watson's friends), informs me that Mrs Watson, before her marriage, was a Miss Edgar. Her father was John Edgar, Laird of Keithock, near Brechin, whose uncle, James Edgar, was Private Secretary to the Chevalier. Of this uncle a good story,<sup>4</sup> exhibiting his unselfish loyalty to the Prince, is on record. Sir Robert Walpole, having reason to expect a Jacobite rising, and believing that every man had his price, wrote several times to Mr Edgar making increasingly handsome offers if he would betray the Stuart plot. But he received no answer to his advances. Concluding, therefore, according to his manner, that he had not yet come up to Mr Edgar's price, he at last wrote to say that, without making any conditions whatever, he had placed £10,000 in the Bank of Venice in the name of Mr Edgar. The Secretary then consulted the Prince, and, after a brief interval, returned for answer that he had received Sir Robert's letter. He thanked him for the £10,000, which he had lost no time in drawing from the Bank and had just laid it at the feet of his Royal Master, who had the best title to gold that came, as this had done, from England! Such was Mrs Watson's great uncle. Another was Henry Edgar, Bishop of Fife, 1759-65.<sup>4</sup> Her mother was the daughter of Mr Ogilvy, Minister of Tannadyce, near Forfar.

The year in which the marriage took place I have not ascertained. Some circumstances, such as the great improvement in Mr Watson's income on his settlement at Laurencekirk, would suggest the beginning of the last decade of the eighteenth century as a likely time, and that is why the subject has been introduced at this point. Other circumstances, however, such as the fact that the two children of the

<sup>4</sup> See Gordon's "Scotichronicon," Vol. v. pp. 293-4, and "Bishop Alexander, Ch. xvii.

marriage, Catherine Mary and John,<sup>5</sup> were born respectively about 1803<sup>6</sup> and 1805, would lead us to place it about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

According to Miss Moir, the tradition is that the married couple lived very happily together, and this is what we should have expected from all that we know of Mr Watson's gentle and considerate character.

As we have no description of his personal appearance, this may be the best place for stating that a watch-chain made of his hair is in Miss Moir's possession, and shows that it was very fair and worn very long.

And then, immediately after his settlement at Laurence-kirk, came another advance, not indeed in wealth, for in those days the income of a Scottish Bishop was practically *nil*, but of responsibility and rank. Our Presbyter, who was now thirty-one years of age, was elected to the Episcopate. The story of his elevation is as follows :—

As we saw in Chapter x., Bishop Rose, while retaining the See of Dunblane, resigned that of Dunkeld in 1786; and, owing to the circumstances already detailed, that Diocese was still vacant. However, the Bishop died in 1791. And in bidding him farewell, the reader will surely feel that his is a pathetic figure. To be sure, the uncompromising Jacobite position, which he took up, is now generally allowed to have been a mistaken one. To say no more, it was, as Dr Gleig pointed out on October 9th, 1783, an error to erect a political theory into an essential Church principle. Nevertheless in the case of Bishop Rose it was the head and not the heart, which was at fault. In a very difficult matter, arguments, which seemed to a large section of the nation conclusive, led him to take up an untenable position. That was pardonable.

<sup>5</sup> John Watson is said to have gone to India, and to have died young. Mrs Watson, however, and her daughter, long survived the Bishop. One of my own earliest and dimmest recollections is being taken by my aunt about the year 1866, to call on Miss Watson in Pitt Street, Edinburgh, where she lived. Miss Moir records that she was an enthusiastic Jacobite. She had in her possession the blue ribbon which Prince Charlie wore at Culloden, and which she was proud to show to visitors. One day, however, an "up-to-date" American lady, to whom the ribbon was being shown, whipped out a pair of scissors wherewith to cut off a piece. After that, Miss Watson always held on to one end of the treasure while showing it to friends. She survived till January 8th, 1884, but although she was known to my mother, I never saw her after 1867. The precious ribbon was taken by the Edgars along with other relics to Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Catherine's birthday was October 12th.

On the other hand we cannot withhold our sympathy, even our admiration, from one whose Ordination had been partially interrupted by the romantic endeavour of his hero to regain his ancestral throne<sup>7</sup>; the friends of whose youth had everywhere sacrificed their worldly fortunes in the same cause, and whose sister was betrothed to one, who in that chivalrous endeavour was put to death in a barbarous manner, and who, having thus had his imagination and his affections captured in his boyhood, remained unshakenly loyal to the hour of his death in old age. Others might fall away from the sacred cause; he at least would be true to the last. "Among the faithless, faithful only he!" That is how he would look upon himself, and, so looked at, this last of the Scottish Jacobites is surely a pathetic figure!

Steps were now taken to fill the vacant See of Dunkeld, and the following extracts from the MS. Register of the Diocese give an account of what occurred:—

"FORFAR, 4th July, 1792.

"The Clergy of this Diocese being requested to convene here this day, there attended the Rev. George Skene, Wm. Nicoll, Wm. Jolly, and Alexr. Walker, when, after prayers were said, and a meeting regularly constituted, having taken under consideration the destitute state of the Diocese since the resignation [i.e. in 1786] of the late Bishop Rose, the Clergy present were unanimous in their opinion that the Dean ought, without loss of time, to apply to the Primus and his colleagues for a mandate to elect a Bishop. Application having been made accordingly the Dean received a letter from the Primus acquainting him that a mandate would be sent as soon as possible, and he was persuaded it would come to hand before August 1st in order that they might proceed to an election, but owing to some delay, the mandate not having been received in due time, the meeting for this purpose was postponed until the 20th of this month [i.e. August]."

"August 20th, 1792.

"A meeting of the Clergy of the Diocese being appointed to be held here this day in order to elect a successor to our late worthy Ordinary, the Dean, after prayers, produced a mandate from the Bishops of Scotland, the tenor whereof follows:—Very Rev. and Dear Brethren, Whereas the Diocese of Dunkeld has been

<sup>7</sup> See Chap. ii.

vacant since the resignation of the late Bishop Rose, and by a letter under your hands, addressed to the Primus, you have requested that he and his Right Rev. colleagues would send you a mandate that you may be in a capacity to elect a successor to the said Bishop Rose, We, the subscribing Bishops of the Church of Scotland, Do by these Presents authorize and empower you to meet and elect a proper person for taking the Episcopal charge of the said Diocese of Dunkeld. And we have sent our mandate to the Very Rev. George Skene, your Dean, and appoint him to call you together for the said purpose as soon as he possibly can, and so intimate to us the issue of your Election, with all convenient speed. We earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit may direct you in your choice and heartily commending you in all things to the Divine benediction, We are, Very Rev. and Dear Brethren, Your faithful and affectionate humble servants,

JOHN SKINNER, Bishop of Aberdeen,  
Aberdeen, July 10th, 1792.

ANDREW M'FARLANE, Bishop of Moray and Ross,  
Inverness, July, 24th, 1792.

WM. ABERNETHY-DRUMMOND, Ep.  
Hawthornden, July 29th, 1792.

JOHN STRACHAN, Bishop of Brechin,  
Dundee, August 1st, 1792.

TO THE VERY REV. THE PRESBYTERS OF DUNKELD."

The Register proceeds:—

"The Rev. Mr Robertson" in Athol having excused himself from attending this meeting in a letter to the Dean and also signified his acquiescence with the choice of the majority, and Mr Nicoll having dissented from the choice of the rest of his brethren, who severally voted for the Rev. J. Watson at Laurencekirk in Mairns, as the person most deserving the Episcopate and every way fittest to take the charge of this Diocese, it was resolved that, although the Rev. James Lyall had invested Mr Jolly with a power of proxy to vote for the said Mr Watson, yet the deed of Election should be carried by the

<sup>17</sup> Ordained Deacon by Bishop Rose and Priest by Bishop Ab. Drummond, both in 1787. D.R.

Clerk to his house, that he might sign it himself. The deeds were accordingly, after being subscribed by the Dean, agreed to by Mr Lyall at Shielhill, where they were subscribed by him, and afterwards by Mr Jolly and Mr Walker, and transmitted by Mr Jolly to the Primus and Mr Watson at Laurencekirk, the 21st being appointed for the second general Convention."

And then we have a copy of Mr Watson's letter of acceptance:

"TO THE VERY REV. GEORGE SKENE, DEAN OF THE DISTRICT OF DUNKELD, AND THE REV. JAMES LYALL, WILLIAM JOLLY, AND ALEXR. WALKER, PRESBYTERS OF THE SAME DISTRICT.

"REVEREND BRETHREN,—Your letter of the 1st instant, which I have received, notifies to me that, having met in consequence of a mandate, to elect a successor to your late Ordinary, you have elected me. I am deeply sensible of the great honour you have done me, at the same time that I am unfeignedly conscious of my unworthiness to fill that very important office. Yet, seriously considering the situation of our Church, and trusting to the gracious support of her Almighty Head, if the Bishops shall be pleased to confirm the Election, I humbly acquiesce. I beg that you will accept of my most hearty thanks on this occasion, and believe that I am, Reverend Brethren,

"Your obliged and affectionate humble servant,  
"JONATHAN WATSON."

At first sight these extracts seem to supply a full and straightforward account of Mr Watson's election to the See of Dunkeld. But a careful perusal of the account leaves a confused sense of something unusual in the procedure having taken place. And that such was actually the fact has been proved by Dr Walker in his "Life of Bishop Gleig," on pp. 223-224. That writer, after examining certain definite statements in letters written by the subject of his biography, sums up as follows:—

"There seems, then, no reason whatever to doubt that in September [it should be August], 1792, Mr Gleig was regularly and unanimously elected Bishop for

the second time by the Clergy of Dunkeld, and that the Episcopal College decidedly, and 'with circumstances of insult,' refused to confirm the election; that then the Clergy were worked upon by some influence to transfer their votes to Mr Watson of the Diocese of Aberdeen; that they, or part of them, consented to do so, and thus, without a second meeting of the Clergy, Mr Watson was held to be duly elected. . . . Finally, in order to preserve appearances, in extending the Minutes, Mr Gleig's name was altogether omitted and Mr Watson's only inserted."

This being the case, it is no wonder that in writing to a friend sixteen years later on the subject of Mr Watson, Dr Gleig should speak of "the singular mode in which he suffered himself to be elected to the See of Dunkeld." But we must not think hardly of Mr Watson's conduct on this occasion. In the *first* place, he was absolutely persuaded of the serious unorthodoxy of Dr Gleig. This appears from a letter of his written to the Rev. A. Cruickshank on March 10th, 1793, in which he says\* :—

"Certainly Mr Gleig holds worse tenets than an Arian does. He, it seems, was not conceived in sin, nor born in iniquity; he says he comes into the world with as little taint in his nature as Adam had, when he was created. On this principle what necessity is there for the Atonement, and, of course, what necessity is there that Christ should be more than a mere man? And, in strict conformity to all this, and to sum up the whole, Mr Gleig, I understand, denies the eternity of hell torments. Judge now if some antidote be not needful to prevent the infection from spreading and to preserve the Church from being overrun with other incomers of the same kidney!"

And in another letter<sup>†</sup> he adds :—

"Ah, Mr Gleig, pride it was that ruined Adam and beware lest pride ruin you, after Christ has recovered you, for no humble man would say what you have done."

\* Cr. MSS. XXXVII. p. 3.

† "Bp. Gleig," p. 221.

And, although the controverted words of Dr Gleig are to be regarded charitably as only being used with exaggerated emphasis by him in expressing his dislike of the gloomy Calvinism then prevalent in Scotland, yet Dr Walker admits<sup>10</sup> that in his younger days he did "sometimes express himself with extreme laxity in conversation on the subject," and therefore Mr Watson had some real ground for dreading his admission to the Episcopate. But *secondly*, it is to be remembered that it was not the Presbyter of Laurencekirk who annulled Mr Gleig's election. He had no power, even if he had the will, to do so. It was undoubtedly Bishop Skinner, who was once more spontaneously responsible for Mr Gleig's exclusion. Mr Watson's position in the matter seems simply to have been this, that, being a young man of a conservative and reverential cast of mind, with a deep respect for the Bishops as Bishops and unbounded confidence in Bishop Skinner personally, he had no misgivings about their exclusion of the "unsound" Dr Gleig, and was genuinely persuaded of the lawfulness of his own subsequent call to the Episcopate, if, as proved to be the case, it was ratified by the Synod of Bishops. No doubt, when he referred to "the very serious situation of our Church" in his letter of acceptance, he was thinking of the harm which a Pelagian Bishop of bold character and unusual intellectual power (for Mr Gleig was editor of the "Encyclopædia Britannica") would be likely to do to his beloved Zion, and considered himself, however inferior to Mr Gleig in attainments, as providentially chosen to occupy the vacant throne.

"The Bishops met at Stonehaven and Mr Watson was consecrated [on September 20th, 1792] in that town by Bishop Skinner, assisted by Bishops Macfarlane, Abernethy-Drummond, and Strachan, and appointed Bishop of Dunkeld and "Clerk to the Episcopal Synod."<sup>11</sup>

Bishop of Dunkeld! But of what a sadly reduced Dunkeld! The list of charges and Clergy for the Diocese was only as follows:—

- |                     |         |                               |
|---------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Forfar           | . . . . | George Skene, <i>Dean</i>     |
| 2. Perth            | . . . . | Alexander Walker              |
| 3 and 4. Kirriemuir |         | James Lyall and William Jolly |
| 5. Meikle           | . . . . | William Nicoll                |
| 6. Athol            | . . . . | John Robertson <sup>12</sup>  |

<sup>10</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 221.

<sup>11</sup> Ep Chest 1499. "T. S.," Vol. iv. p. 438. Skinner's "Annals," p. 257.

<sup>12</sup> Dunk. Reg., and see Note 13.

Immediately before the rising of the "Forty-Five," at the time of Bishop Rattray's death and the election of Bishop Alexander, "the number of the names" was thirteen. The penal laws were doing their work. The Church was indeed "the shadow of a shade!"

All honour therefore to those who "against hope believed in hope." Certainly, at least, the new Bishop was a man worthy of honour. Linshart's grandson, "Forfar John," who, as we saw previously, knew him and succeeded him at Banff and Portsoy, speaks thus of him<sup>14</sup>:—

"This excellent man's deportment was marked by something so decorous in society, and by a mien, a voice and manner so attractive in the immediate discharge of his sacred office, as to command the respect of all who knew him, or who witnessed the performance of his official duties."

The historian, Thomas Stephen, who published his great history in four volumes scarcely thirty years after Bishop Watson's death and must therefore have been a contemporary, says<sup>15</sup>:—

"He was a diligent and successful student, and his classical and theological attainments did credit to his venerable instructor" [i.e. Skinner of Linshart].

And Dean Walker, who by tradition and study was familiar with every point in the history of the Church in the north during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, sums up his impression of him thus<sup>16</sup>:—

"All accounts agree in representing him as a good, amiable, serious-minded man, with a turn for scholarly and theological disquisition."

<sup>13</sup> For the purpose of connecting each of these Clergy with the charge here assigned to him, it will suffice to refer to the MS Dunkeld Register under the following dates:—1. July 17th, 1776. 2. September 8th, 1789. 3. July 17th, 1776. 4. February 15th, 1794. 5. July 17th, 1776. 6. October 17th, 1787. The account of Bishop Watson's election will show that they constituted the whole Diocese.

<sup>14</sup> "Annals," pp. 468-9.

<sup>15</sup> "T. S.," Vol. iv. p. 481.

<sup>16</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 224.

## CHAPTER XIV

1792.—EARLY EPISCOPATE—NO DIOCESAN SYNOD—APPOINTMENT OF DEAN—ATTEMPTS TO FILL DUNBLANE AND FIFE—  
REV. A. JOLLY.

AT this point the present writer excusably supposed that henceforth the MS. *Register* of the Diocese of Dunkeld would provide him with ample and consecutive material for compiling at least the official life of the Bishop. As a matter of fact, however, with a single exception, there is not the remotest allusion to him from the date of his election until we find the record of his end. The two or three entries which occur during his Episcopate refer only to the deaths of the Diocesan Clergy who passed away in his time.<sup>17</sup>

Even from this blank, however, we learn something positive, and that is that he must have clung with his usual conservative tenacity to a conception of a Bishop's duties, which began to prevail in Scotland during the eighteenth century.\* What that conception was may be gathered from the following extract from Dr Gordon's "*Scotichronicon*"<sup>1</sup>:—

"On 28th June, 1819, the Rev. John Skinner of Forfar addressed a letter to his Bishop [i.e. Bishop Watson's successor, Bishop Torry] insisting upon a charge and a Diocesan Synod, to which came the following rejoinder:—'The holding of synodical meetings is, in my view, purely a question of expediency, and not of indispensable duty; and the expediency of holding them in the Diocese of Dunkeld did not hitherto appear to me any more than to my two colleagues in the north, Bishop Jolly and Bishop Macfarlane (now with God), neither of whom ever delivered a charge to their Clergy synodically assembled, and neither of whom would have omitted anything that seemed conducive to their respective portions of the household of faith.'"

We may be pretty sure that if anyone had asked Bishop

<sup>17</sup> i.e. Revs. J. Lyall on Feb. 15, 1794; W. Jolly, July 20, 1796. Dean Skene, April 19, 1797. Rev. J. Buchan came from Montrose to Kirriemuir, Jan. 1, 1797, and Rev. John Skinner to Forfar from Banff. D.R.

\* But cf. Bishop Alexander's and Bishop White's practice.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi. p. 355.

Watson to explain the blank in his *Diocesan Register*, he would have almost verbally anticipated Bishop Torry's above reply to Mr Skinner. Great as was his respect for Bishop Skinner, who revived the Diocesan Synod of Aberdeen, as narrated above in Chapter VII, he evidently preferred for his own Diocese the other tradition to that energetic Prelate's example!

We must rely accordingly upon the same materials as previously, i.e. surviving MSS. supplemented by quotations and statements in Scottish ecclesiastical histories and biographies, for continuing our account of Bishop Watson:—

The one solitary entry concerning his Episcopate, which occurs in the Dunkeld Register, is as follows:—

“These do certify all whom it may concern that I, Jonathan Watson, as Bishop of the Diocese of Dunkeld, do, in terms of the 6th of the Canons enacted in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-three, nominate and appoint the Rev. George Skene at Forfar, to be Dean of the said Diocese and authorize him to exercise the said office agreeably to the Canons<sup>2</sup> of the Episcopal Church. In testimony whereof I have subscribed these presents at Laurencekirk this seventh day of February, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three years.

“JON. WATSON. BISHOP.”

This seems to have been interpreting the Canon, under which he acted very literally; for, though it says that “every Bishop shall appoint one of his Presbyters to officiate under him as Dean,” yet the Bishop of Dunkeld [i.e. Rose] had in 1786 already appointed Mr Skene to that office,<sup>3</sup> and in that capacity he had presided over the meetings, which had resulted in the election of Bishop Watson himself.

One casual statement in a letter<sup>4</sup> survives to show that the Bishop visited his Diocese in person shortly after his consecration, for he mentions meeting the Rev. Wm. Jolly in Forfar

<sup>2</sup> For which see “T. S.,” Vol. iv. p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> Dunk. Reg.

<sup>4</sup> “Ep. Hist. Perth,” p. 221. See also Appendix to “Bishop Alexander.”

in December, 1792.<sup>5</sup> But, if our information concerning the Bishop's acts within his own Diocese is meagre, we know that he was at once called upon to take his part in several matters affecting the Church at large:—

(a) And among the first of these was an attempt to fill the vacancy in the See of Dunblane. So far as I can find, no account of this is given anywhere else<sup>6</sup>; but from the MSS. which till recently were in private keeping but have now been handed over to the Library of Perth Cathedral, we are enabled to reconstruct the history. The *first* MS. is a mandate, in the handwriting of Bishop Skinner and with his signature as Primus, which was sent to our friend, the Rev. A. Cruickshank, empowering him, as the solitary Presbyter left in the Diocese of Dunblane, along with those of Fife (S. Andrew's), i.e. the Rev. Messrs John Rhind, at Alloa; Wm. Robb,<sup>7</sup> at S. Andrews; and David Low,<sup>8</sup> at Pittenweem, "to meet and elect a proper person for taking the Episcopal charge of the said united districts." The document is dated July 10th, 1792, or about two months previous to Bishop Watson's consecration. The *second* MS. is a mandate, also in Bishop Skinner's handwriting, exactly to the same effect and signed by all the five Bishops, including Bishop Watson, at dates ranging from December 15th, 1792, to January 16th, 1793.

<sup>5</sup> This Mr Jolly had been ordained Deacon to assist Dean Innes at Perth on S. Peter's Day, 1786. He stayed there, however, only for about a year, and then, having been ordained a Priest in Forfar on July 19th, 1787 (Dunk. Reg.), was appointed to assist the Rev. James Lyall in Kirriemuir, whom he succeeded in that charge in 1794. But his Ministry was very brief, for he died on July 20th, 1796.

<sup>6</sup> "Grub," Vol. iv. p. 111, only says:—"Intimation was made to the Clergy that they might apply for a mandate to elect a Bishop, but they did not avail themselves of the privilege." *Thomas Stephen* says nothing. *Lawson*, (p. 343) and even *Skinner* in his "Annals," (p. 257) state that Dunkeld and Dunblane were now united under Bishop Watson, which indeed they soon practically were, but not till *after* the attempt described above. *Dean Walker* in his "Life of Bishop Gleig," (p. 225) is silent, although his hero was implicated in the matter. *William Stephen* says nothing. The MSS. *Dunblane Register* in Perth Cathedral Library is altogether blank during this period. The fact is, the Dunblane documents were in the private keeping of Mr Cruickshank and his heirs, until they were given to the Cathedral Library in 1910.

<sup>7</sup> Mr Robb had charge of Pittenween and Crail 1787-9, and of S. Andrew's 1789-1820. In 1809, he published a volume of poems. He was a fine-looking, portly man with kindly manners, and was well liked by all that knew him. He died in 1830.—O.'s "St. A.," pp. 20-22 and 30.

<sup>8</sup> There are two "Lives" of this divine. One by Blatch. Grant & Sons, 1855. The other by Connolly. Grant & Sons, 1859.

The *third* MS., which was folded up inside the second mandate, contains on the front, in the handwriting of the Rev. A. Cruickshank, the following<sup>9</sup>:—

“*For Mr Low.* I have now fixed Wed. 8th of next month for our meeting in Perth in Mr W[alker]’s C[hapel] between 11 and 12 o’clock for e purpose of electing our Ordinary; when, I hope, you’ll find it convenient to attend in person, or at any rate by proxy, tho’ e first would be more eligible. I most ardently wish we may fix on a man who will make it his study to labour for e good of our poor, distracted Church, which at present stands in need of some burning and shining lights.”

On the back there is found in the same hand:—

“*To the Bishops.* Rt. Rev. Fayrs., We, the subscribers, Presbyters of e united districts of D. and F. In consequence of a Mandate from you and your Rt. Rev. Colleagues, to meet and elect a Bishop for e united districts. Have accordingly met together at Perth this day in Rev. Alek. Walker’s Chapel, and, suffrages being regularly asked, have made choice of [blank in MS.] for our Bishop. And we hope [blank].”

The front of MS. No. 3, as given above, is evidently the copy of the summons sent by Mr Cruickshank to the Rev. D. Low of Pittenweem, and doubtless those to the other Clergy would be identical; and the matter written on the back of the same MS. is evidently the draught of his intended report to the Bishops, which he took with him to the meeting, as chairman.

The *fourth* MS. is an autograph letter of Bishop Watson addressed to the Rev. A. Cruickshank and dated March 10th, 1793, which shows him adhibiting his episcopal signature to yet a third mandate for the electors of Dunblane and Fife, and dispatching it, along with his letter, to Mr Cruickshank, who was their Dean in this affair<sup>10</sup>:—

“Had matters (he says) been in a train agreeable to you and me, the mandate would have been returned to

<sup>9</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXVI. addition.

<sup>10</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXVII.

you ere this time. . . . At your desire, therefore, I reluctantly sign the mandate and enclose it to you. Almighty God, Who has the hearts of all men in his hand, influence your brethren and you and overrule your choice to his own glory and the good of the Church."

Now what is the inference to be drawn from the fact that the Bishops were issuing a third mandate on March 10th, 1793? Obviously, that the two former mandates of July 10th and December 15th, 1792, had not resulted in the election of a Bishop, notwithstanding the meeting of electors presumably mentioned above by Mr Cruickshank as having been held in the Rev. A. Walker's Chapel in Perth.

And how had the attempt at election proved abortive? The rest of Bishop Watson's letter throws some light on this matter. In it we see Mr Cruickshank, with the active encouragement of the Bishop, doing all he can, but unsuccessfully, to secure a majority for the Rev. Alexander Jolly. Since, however, on the one hand, Mr Gleig, as represented by Bishop Watson, was in a state of "disappointment," and Mr Jolly, on the other, could write as follows "about himself:—

"Know, then, in the first place that there is a speculation of tabling my name at the election of Fife and Dunblane, which, as you may be perfectly assured, I could not have entertained the most distant thought of; so, when it was laid before me, it surprised me wonderfully. *The thing is so extravagant and eccentric that it cannot go forward,*"

it almost looks as if Mr Gleig had been elected and once more rejected by the Primus!

In the same letter, the date of which is October 12th, 1792, Mr Jolly shows us that it was still the reputed unorthodoxy of Mr Gleig which raised so strong a prejudice against him, for he speaks of:—

"The risque of bringing in [i.e. to the Episcopate] another [i.e. Mr Gleig] whose theological principles are so much dreaded, and who by his mathematics and metaphysics might insinuate a leaven that would not be easily purged out again."

"Scot. Ch. Rev.," 1884, p. 176. Dean Walker found this letter with its reference to the election only after he had written his Lives of Bishops Jolly and Gleig, and he knows nothing of the details as given above.

The upshot, therefore, for Dunblane and Fife was that they were left without a Bishop of their own. And how did they fare in such circumstances? As for Dunblane, there can be no doubt from what subsequently transpires<sup>12</sup> that Bishop Watson, without being formally appointed to the vacancy, did yet superintend the solitary charge (Muthill) left in the Diocese. And as for Fife, it is stated by Lawson<sup>13</sup> that about the period of 1793 the Diocese was under Bishop Abernethy-Drummond of Edinburgh. If so, he must have taken charge of it in much the same way in which Bishop Watson took the oversight of Dunblane, for it is not till 1807<sup>14</sup> that we find the Episcopal College formally uniting the Sees of Edinburgh and Fife.

(b) In connection with the above described attempt to procure the election of the Rev. A. Jolly to the united Diocese of Dunblane and Fife a very interesting passage occurs in that divine's letter to Bishop Watson, from which we have already quoted.<sup>15</sup> It is too long to reproduce here in full, but two extracts follow. The first enhances our opinion of the youthful Bishop of Dunkeld by exhibiting him as being high in the regard of the "primitive and saintly" writer, for the latter begins his epistle thus:—

"RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Your highly acceptable letter, the first from you in your new character, I have perused with a warm heart and eyes moistened with tears of joy. How sweet and consolatory a thing is Xn friendship even here below! How divinely ravishing must it be when sublimated above! Your letter convinces me, though indeed I was convinced of it long before, that I may open to you the inmost recesses of my mind!"

And the second throws a new and unexpected light on the character of Mr Jolly himself, inasmuch as it shows our Bishop's ineffective attempt to have him elected to the See of Dunblane and Fife as setting a *Volo Episcopari* working strongly in the good man's breast:—

"I am now to astonish you with a piece of intelligence which, if I be not lucky enough to represent it as it

<sup>12</sup> Chap. xvi.

<sup>13</sup> Vol. ii. pp. 345-6.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. xviii. "1807."

<sup>15</sup> "Scot. Ch. Rev.," 1884, p. 178.

really is, may shock even your firm friendship, which would make me most unhappy. . . . The sad story now follows:—For to my great shame and confusion I must own to you as my Father Confessor—such you must ever be to me—that this altogether unexpected occurrence has conjured up an idea, which had been long laid to rest, and would never indeed have appeared to me as it now does. It was first forced upon me by a worthy Father now in Paradise [Bishop Petrie] whom you, as well as I, loved and respected, and whose memory I'm persuaded is still 'dear to you.'<sup>16</sup> . . . But what is of still greater amazement to me, as well as vast trouble and concern, is that I am now most unaccountably impelled to wish that his will were complied with and that I were the humble and unworthy coadjutor of the Bishop of Moray and Ross, in the former Diocese only! This I must acknowledge is a most extraordinary and indelicate request, which is likely to frustrate itself by its own unseemly appearance. . . .”

<sup>16</sup> See Chap. iv.

## CHAPTER XV

EARLY EPISCOPATE (*Continued*)—THE STONEHAVEN SYNOD—  
—THE THREE ARTICLES AND THEIR RECEPTION—  
ATTEMPTED REUNION WITH THE QUALIFIED—FORMATION  
OF THE FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

ON the day (September 20th, 1792) on which Bishop Watson was consecrated, an Episcopal Synod,<sup>1</sup> at which he was present, was held at Stonehaven. The energetic and far-seeing Primus had, indeed, obtained the repeal of the penal laws but not therewith, as the following extract from a resolution of the Aberdeen Synod on November 7th, 1792, shows, the Church's acceptance of the conditions, demanded by Government<sup>2</sup>:—

“The Bishop and Clergy of this Diocese find that, on taking the Act of Parliament lately passed for the relief of this Church into consideration, they cannot, consistently with the principles they have ever professed, take and subscribe all the oaths which the Act requires.”

He was therefore determined, if possible, to put the ecclesiastical house in order, for the purpose of fitting it to meet its new and improved opportunities. Accordingly he laid before the Synod a draft of Three Articles, which Dr Walker<sup>3</sup> summarises thus:—

“I. A declaration of the principles of the Church, with regard to the fundamental articles of the Christian religion.

“II. A revisal of (*a*) the Canons with such alteration and additions as may form a complete ecclesiastical constitution; and (*b*) also of the Liturgy, so as to adapt it more fully to the state of the Church and to the edification of its members.

<sup>1</sup> Ep. Chest 1499.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. Chest 1502.

<sup>3</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 154.

“III. (a) A larger Catechism than that of the Church of England, for the instruction of young people; (b) and such directions as may serve to introduce a greater uniformity of practice in performing the several duties of the pastoral office.”<sup>4</sup>

*With regard to I.*, it was advisable that the Church should move in the direction indicated, both because it had as yet no doctrinal standard (other than the Catholic creeds) and also because, in order to make the repeal of the penal laws operative, it was necessary to do something towards meeting the surprising but unavoidable demand of the secular power that the religious communion, over which the non-established Scottish Bishops presided, should accept the English theological formula known as the Thirty-nine Articles.

*With regard to II.(a)*, it is to be remembered that in 1689<sup>5</sup> the whole ecclesiastical arrangement of the Church, such as it was, had been shattered by the harsh method in which disestablishment had been carried out; and that, although the rudiment of a Code of Canons had been adopted in 1727 and somewhat enlarged in 1731 and 1743, yet the tragedy of “the Forty-five” had arrested all further development, and that thus the Church’s laws were at present in a most imperfect condition.

*With regard to II. (b)*, it is to be remembered that the *Book of Common Prayer* had not yet been formally adopted as the Service Book of the Church.

*With regard to III.(a)*, the Church being now reduced to “the shadow of a shade,” it is no wonder that Bishop Skinner was keen about the adequate instruction of the rising generation in its principles.

*With regard to II. (b) and III. (b)*, although the Prayer Book was generally used, the rubrics were largely ignored in actual practice, and every Bishop and Presbyter had more or less an independent “use” of his own.

These Articles<sup>6</sup> having been laid before the Synod at Stonehaven, the Bishops, including him who had that day been consecrated, “agreed to recommend them to the Clergy

<sup>4</sup> Would not II (b) and III (b) united form a distinct article IV?

<sup>5</sup> For the history of the Canons, see the introduction to the Code of 1911.

<sup>6</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 154.

of their several districts ” and “ to request their assistance in preparing and digesting proper plans for improvement, which might afterwards be submitted to the consideration of a National Synod.”

But the path of reform is not always smooth; its chariot wheels drove heavily on the present occasion. The Primus, indeed, and the Diocesan Synod of Aberdeen proved themselves to be in earnest in the matter, but the following words of Bishop Watson, addressed to the Rev. A. Cruickshank on March 10th, 1793, show that the Primus had not the Church as a whole at his back :—

“ But what am I to say of those intemperate effusions of the Fife brethren against the Resolutions of the Episcopal Synod? I am young, it is true, and but of yesterday; but surely in that Synod there were others of sense and learning far superior to Mr Low [i.e. of Pittenweem] or Mr Robb<sup>1</sup> [i.e. of S. Andrew's] and who in point of years might be grandfather to either of them. Was it then modest in two young men to hold up these resolutions as the production of evil-minded or wrong-headed men? But I forgive them. I have no anger at them. I pity them being misled. I know at whose school they have been and I must say they are apt enough scholars. Their Philippic is almost a transcript of Mr Gleig's letter to the Primus on the same subject, only there is more vehemence and less of art in their manner than in his. [It is thus evident that the Articles were wrecked by being drawn into the whirlpool of the personal misunderstanding between Primus Skinner and Dr Gleig.] Now Mr Gleig is so thoroughly English that he affects the very errors of the English Priests. He follows them, not only against the general practice of our Church, but he follows them in their offence against their own Rubric. [This is *à propos* of Article III. (b).] Because through laziness, or no better reason, most of the English Clergy have left off that admirable and most Christian prayer ‘ For the whole state of

<sup>1</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXVII. p. 2.

“ The sermon was long and may have been dry; the minister certainly was, as he suddenly startled the congregation by calling to his servant to bring him a bottle of ale. The ale having been produced and consumed, Mr Robb (for it was he) continued his discourse.”—  
“ O.'s St. A., p. 27.

Christ's Church,' Mr Gleig does the same, and, while he pleads against any alterations in the Liturgy, he presumes to argue for that prayer being discharged. Where is the consistency of this? I shall not enter far into this subject, nor would it be possible to discuss it fully in a letter. But, were we together personally, I doubt not but I could convince you of the propriety of any alterations that the Synod had in view. I presume the expediency of a larger *Catechism* [Article III. (a)] and a fuller body of *Canons* [Article II.] is obvious to you. And in these days of irreligion and blasphemous heresy do ye not also see the propriety of some *Standard*, *Symbolism* or *Declaration of Principles* [Article I.]? The English Articles, because they teach the doctrine of Original Sin and the necessity of God's grace in order to good works and that Christ descended into Hell and mention such a thing as Pre-destination (which is a Scripture expression) are inadmissible by Dr Abernethy and perhaps some others. And, even if they were universally subscribed by us, they would perhaps not serve the purpose. Mr Gleig, I presume, would have no scruple to subscribe them, because they are of English origin. Yet certainly Mr Gleig holds worse tenets than an Arian does. [Here follows the passage quoted in Chapter XIV.] To all this perhaps you would prevail on yourself to agree with the less reluctance, if the Resolutioners [i.e. the Bishops in Article II. (b)] did not meddle with the Daily Service and the Occasional Offices. But do not be alarmed. You will not say that the Occasional Offices are perfect, or that there is not a possibility of amending them. In this respect it is sufficient to refer you to the Office of Baptism. It is an excellent Office and I trust it shall never be materially altered. . . . With regard to the Daily Service, I believe no such alterations are intended but that the worship could be carried on easily in the use of the present Liturgy. This, I presume, is a principle point with you and, when this point is secured, you will not say but some alterations and amendments might be introduced. You acknowledge it."

After all, perhaps it was providential that the Three Articles were received with so little favour that a "National Synod" was not summoned to give them canonical force.

No doubt the move was most statesmanlike on the part of the Primus. But there were the "English" or "Qualified" congregations, which still continued in a separated position, to consider, and so far as the opportunity of reunion brought about by the repeal of the penal laws was concerned, it might have been putting the cart before the horse, if the Scottish Church had reformed itself by adopting a doctrinal standard and re-touching the Book of Common Prayer, *previously to* putting their separated brethren in a position to be taken into consultation.

An attempt to bring about union was the natural sequel, and on March 10th, 1793, in a letter to Mr A. Cruickshank, the Bishop alludes to this movement, somewhat colloquially, to be sure, but sympathetically, and adds a remark about the indifference displayed towards it by the "Qualified." He says<sup>9</sup> :—

"Symptoms of a coalition with the English ordained Clergy have appeared in different parts of Scotland; and, would it begin in Edinburgh, it would spread. [He evidently wants it to do so.] But the Doctor [i.e. Abernethy-Drummond, Bishop of Edinburgh] and I [who are evidently working together in the matter] find the English Clergy play with both hands. They amuse him with hopes and then laugh in their own sleeve and then write to their brethren in the North to confirm them in their obstinacy!"

Undiscouraged, however, by the cold reception given to their first overtures the Bishops, under the energetic leadership of the Primus, pushed the movement on, and an account of it, together with the part played in it by Bishop Watson, taken from Lawson's "History of the Scottish Episcopal Church"<sup>10</sup> follows :—

"The penal laws were repealed and Bishop Skinner, as his son observes, was 'wholly bent towards healing the unseemly schism, which political expediency had ceased to render justifiable in the sight of men, and which in God's sight could never, he thought, be justified!' It appeared to the Bishops and others that the most likely means to effect a speedy union would be to invite an eminent clergyman of the Church of

<sup>9</sup> Cr. MSS. XXXVII. p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> "Lawson," pp. 345-6.

England into Scotland and be there consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of Edinburgh. Dr Abernethy-Drummond was at that time Bishop of the united Dioceses of Edinburgh, Fife<sup>11</sup> and Glasgow, but he expressed his willingness to relinquish the diocesan jurisdiction of Edinburgh to promote a measure, which would tend to strengthen the Scottish Episcopal Church and make the communion more intimate with the Church of England. The clergyman proposed was the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, then Vicar of Epsom, who had suffered much for his loyalty in America and who was respected and revered by all who knew him. So highly was Mr Boucher esteemed that he was at one time thought of for the Bishopric of Nova Scotia and the Archbishop of Canterbury was even entreated to obtain him for Canada. In a letter to Bishop Skinner, dated March 13th, 1793, Bishop Abernethy-Drummond states that 'he most cheerfully adopted the plan, which he [Bishop Skinner] and Bishop Watson proposed, and would immediately resign in favour of the worthy Vicar of Epsom, if he should be so good as accept the See of Edinburgh.' After some correspondence Mr Boucher visited Edinburgh, and his reception, to use his own words, was highly flattering and favourable. . . . But unfortunately the intentions of the Bishops were in this instance frustrated. It was industriously circulated that 'the scheme in agitation was to introduce Bishops with the sanction of the Government and on such legal footing as would entitle them to some legal jurisdiction.' Mr Boucher at once declined proceeding further in the matter."

Dean Walker here adds:—

"The Edinburgh English Clergy, Mr Stevens says, 'never shewed goodwill to the measure' and he states (letter June 4th, 1794) on the authority of Sir William Forbes that 'the English Clergy were at the top and bottom of the clamour.'"<sup>12</sup>

Doubtless the failure of these two attempts of the Primus, the one to effect Church Reform and the other to heal the

<sup>11</sup> See Ch. xiv. p. 93.

<sup>12</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 160.

schism of the "Qualified," would be a great disappointment, not only to Bishop Skinner himself but also to his colleague, Bishop Watson, who had worked with him in both matters.

But, though the efforts were for the present futile, they did not fail to educate Church opinion and to set ideals before men's minds, which led on to ultimate success.

There was another project, however, of a humbler nature, perhaps, but yet of the greatest practical importance, the immediate success of which rendered the year 1793 noteworthy. It was the formation of the Friendly Society. The origin and foundation of this was described in a "Brief" addressed to the Church by the Bishops. They rapidly sketched the history of Scottish Episcopal finance from the disaster of sudden disendowment in 1689, through the dark period of the penal laws, up to the date with which we are dealing. As such a sketch<sup>14</sup> may be interesting to the officials and members of the Representative Church Council of the twentieth century, we make a considerable quotation<sup>15</sup> :—

"The distressed situation of the ejected Clergy [i.e. in 1689] many of whom were driven to the utmost extremity of want, could not fail to excite the compassion of well-disposed Christians. . . . Public contributions were made in various places and donations received from private hands. Nor was the aid of this charity confined solely to those who had been deprived of their livings by the abolition of Episcopacy; it was with equal propriety-extended not only to their widows and families but also to their successors in office, many of whom, from a variety of causes, were found to stand in equal need of this charitable assistance. . . . The zeal and abilities, wherewith (the latter) discharged the duties of their sacred functions, were not always sufficient to procure such a decent subsistence as is necessary to wherewith (the latter) discharged the duties of their sacred functions, were not always sufficient to procure such a decent subsistence as is necessary to the support of the clerical character." It was to

<sup>14</sup> If this bird's-eye view of the financial arrangements of the Church from 1689 to 1793 be followed by a perusal of the later sketch given in my "History of the Lay Claims," pp. 188, 226-9, an outline of the subject not elsewhere procurable in a consecutive form will be obtained.

<sup>15</sup> "Annals," p. 274, etc.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Bishop Watson's experience, Chap. vii. p. 46.

supply this want, as well as to hold out some small but permanent relief to the widows and orphans of the Clergy, as died in indigent circumstances, that the plan of a charitable fund was first suggested; and what part of the monies collected for that purpose could be spared from immediate distribution was put into the hands of such persons as were thought most proper to be intrusted with the management of it. Under their administration this fund continued to be feebly supported by a few occasional donations and small but regular collections in the city of Edinburgh, which is the only place that has contributed to it for many years past." But, yielding to the necessity of the times and influenced by various motives, the persons, to whom the care of it was committed, have allowed it to be almost totally exhausted. . . . The poorer Clergy are already deprived of its assistance and no future widows or orphans can expect any relief from it. . . . The Bishops and Clergy of that small portion, which yet remains of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, have digested a scheme for the support of that Church and the decent subsistency of its Clergy and their families, which they humbly submit to the consideration of those who continue steadfast in its communion. Willing to take the benefit of a law, which has been lately enacted for the encouragement of Friendly Societies, they have formed themselves into one of these, and adopted such regulations<sup>17</sup> for raising and managing a charitable fund, as have received that civil sanction, which the law prescribes and will entitle them to its protection."

This lengthened extract is justified in a "Life of Bishop Watson," not only because he was one of the Bishops who signed<sup>18</sup> and issued the appeal from which it is taken, but also because (as we have seen in Chapter VII.) he was amongst those who had felt the pressure of the grinding poverty described all too gently in the Episcopal "Brief," and not improbably owed to that cause the trial of chronic ill-health! He would therefore sign and issue the Appeal and afterwards attend the general meetings of the Society, as we

<sup>17</sup> For an account of collections being made in Perth in 1755 see "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 211.

<sup>18</sup> A copy of these is in the Library of Perth Cathedral.

<sup>19</sup> "Annals," p. 281.

find him doing in September 1800<sup>20</sup> and October 1805, not merely as a piece of routine but with the liveliest personal interest in the matter in hand! The upshot was that the foundation of this Friendly Society effected great and lasting good in the subsequent history of the Church.

Before leaving the subject it will be interesting to note that at the annual meeting of 1800 our old friend, the Rev. John Cruickshank, was appointed secretary of the Society. On September 12th of that year Bishop Watson writes to the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank of Muthill:—

“I saw your Cousin John at the meeting and in far better spirits than I could have expected. This I ascribed to the presence of his friend Bishop Macfarlane from Inverness. The sight of him brought to mind many pleasant scenes of former times and had a remarkable effect upon him in the way of vivacity. We have voted your cousin into the secretary’s office in the room of Mr Aitken,” who is now no member of the Committee.”

<sup>20</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIV. p. 2, and Ep. Chest 405.

<sup>21</sup> The Rev. Roger Aitken appears as Clerk of the Aberdeen “Presbytery” in 1786; Clerk of the first Laurencekirk Convention, at which he also moved the resolution thanking the Primus; is put on the Repeal Committee, and writes a letter giving interesting statistical information in 1792.—(See Walker’s “Bp. J. S.,” pp. 54, 97, 102, 104, and “T. S.,” Vol. iv. p. 439.)

## CHAPTER XVI

### 1795-1800.—QUIET CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

IN the years which followed the repeal of the penal laws, "the Church was very slow to realize the benefits of the Relief Act.<sup>1</sup> No doubt the Clergy needed some time to make up their minds to take the oaths and sign the Thirty-nine Articles." But, although we have reached a period which was "ecclesiastically rather barren of interest and incident," there are several events which we cannot pass by without notice.

(a) The Consecration of the Rev. A. Jolly to the Episcopate makes the year 1796 notable, and, as Bishop Watson was concerned in that event, it is necessary to give some account of it.

Eleven years previous to this, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> there had been a proposal to appoint Mr Jolly coadjutor to the infirm Bishop Petrie of Moray and Ross. He had also been proposed in 1792 at the election for Fife and Dunblane,<sup>3</sup> and the letter from the good man himself quoted at the end of Chapter XIV. shows that he was far from being ready to say "*Nolo Episcopari*." Both plans, however, had failed. But now it was again proposed that he should be consecrated. Bishop Petrie's successor, Bishop Macfarlane, to be sure, had still nearly a quarter of a century's work before him, and therefore there was less need at present than in Bishop Petrie's time for a coadjutor. Still, there was a more or less general consensus of opinion that Mr Jolly ought to be a Bishop! To this the majority of the Episcopal College agreed. The Primus, indeed, whose power in rejecting Bishops-elect was so great, strongly opposed the scheme, and with far better reason than had often led him to keep nominees from the Bench. But on this occasion the majority, without a very strong case in their favour, yet with complete canonical regularity, struck a blow at the autocracy of the Primus;

<sup>1</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. viii. p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. xiv. II. (a.)

procured Mr Jolly's election to the See of Moray, leaving Ross and Argyle to Bishop Macfarlane, and, meeting at Dundee on the eve of S. John Baptist's Day (June 23rd, 1796), appointed Bishop Abernethy-Drummond Primus, or President, for the occasion, and thus consecrated Mr Jolly. The officiating Prelates were Bishops Abernethy-Drummond, Strachan, and Macfarlane.\*

And what part did the Bishop of Dunkeld play in this drama? The following is the account given by Dean Walker †:—

“The Minute of the Dundee meeting [i.e. in the Episcopal Register] bears distinct witness to the state of confusion into which the Church was thrown by this *quasi*-revolt of the Episcopal College. The Clerk of the College, Bishop Watson, a great friend both of the Primus and of Mr Jolly, did not appear at the meeting. Apparently the only persons present were the three consecrating Bishops and the Bishop-elect; and the latter was appointed clerk of the meeting. The Minute does not open in the usual way, with the date and *sederunt*, but with a bald, though quite uncontroversial, statement of the events that led up to the meeting. And the following note is appended to the Minute:—‘The above being sent by post for insertion in the Episcopal Minute Book, is accordingly inserted.—JONATHAN WATSON, Clerk.’”

(b) There was one duty falling to be discharged by the present bench of Bishops, which, since 1689, was quite new in the Scottish Church, and that was the drawing up of an occasional address to the King. Thus in 1795 ‡:—

“The Bishops and Clergy transmitted an address to the Throne, in consequence of the King having been attacked in his way to open Parliament on October 29th by a tumultuous and lawless mob.”

Again in 1800 §:—

\* For Bishop Jolly's consecration see “Bp. Jolly,” p. 43. “Bp. J. S.,” pp. 163-8. “T. S.,” Vol. iv. pp. 446-7. “Grub,” Vol. iv. p. 114.

† “Bp. J. S.,” p. 166.

‡ “T. S.,” p. 446.

§ “T. S.,” p. 452.

"The only transaction that has been recorded in this year is an address to the throne by the Bishops and Clergy of the Catholic Church of Scotland in consequence of the attempt of one Hatfield, a lunatic, who fired a pistol at the King in Drury Lane Theatre."

Again (crossing the border-line of the two centuries), in 1802 the writer, from whom we have been quoting,<sup>8</sup> notes an "Address on the Peace of Amiens," and once more in 1803 records that<sup>9</sup> :—

"When the war with France again broke out, the Primus and the other Bishops issued an address to the laity of the Church, on their duties, which was ordered to be read by every Clergyman within their jurisdiction 'after divine service in their several congregations, on the first Sunday after they shall have received the same.'

"At<sup>10</sup> the same time the Bishops forwarded a humble address, in their own and in their Clergy's names, to the King, professing the utmost loyalty to his person and Government."

In only the last of these cases has the historian reproduced the signatures (among which that of Bishop Watson occurs) but there can be no reasonable doubt that he signed the others as well.

And, although it is taking us still further into the nineteenth century, this will be the most convenient place for recording that our Bishop evidently authorized a Thanksgiving in his Diocese for the victory of the King's Navy at Trafalgar, for amongst Mr Cruickshank's MSS. there is a small scrap of paper, on which the following is written :—

"For Lord Nelson's Victory, 1805 :—1st Proper Lesson, 2 Sam. xxii. ; 2nd Do., Phil. iv. 4. Epistle, 1 Thess. iii. 7. Gospel, S. Matt. v. 1-13. Proper Psalms, xxi., xxxiii., lxiv., xcvi. *Evening*.—1st Proper Lesson, Jer. xxxiii. 2nd Do., Rom. xiv. Proper Psalms, cxxv., cxxvi., cxlvii. For a General Peace."

<sup>8</sup> "T. S.," p. 452.

<sup>9</sup> "T. S.," p. 460.

<sup>10</sup> "T. S.," p. 461.

All this throws light on the Bishop's character. We have seen that by nature he was of a conservative disposition: instinctively walking in the old paths; but his choice of a different direction from that adopted by his old Jacobite friend, Bishop Rose, in 1788; his joining those who then agreed to recognize "the powers that be," and now his signing of these addresses and rejoicing in the victory of King George's forces, show that he faithfully endeavoured to give due weight to the logic of altered circumstances, as well as to tradition. It cannot have been without much heart-searching that he, who as a youth, started as one of that company of friends, who in 1781 and 1782 were resolved to continue "honest [i.e. Jacobite] to their dying day,"<sup>11</sup> signed these addresses to King George III.

(c) As ordinations must have been somewhat rare and notable events in the life of a Scottish Bishop at the close of the eighteenth century, we give here all that has come down to us in this connection in the Episcopate of Bishop Watson. The following entry occurs in the Brechin Diocesan Register<sup>12</sup>:—

"MONTROSE, *March 10th, 1799.*

"The Congregation in Montrose having applied to Bishop Strachan, our Ordinary, to have Mr David Moir put in Priest's Orders before Easter, the Bishop agreed to their request; and, either finding himself infirm or consulting Mr Moir's convenience, he devolved the business on Bishop Watson at Laurencekirk, and empowered him to take the necessary steps. Bishop Watson accordingly fixed on March 13th for the time and Montrose for the place of Mr Moir's Presbyteration and wrote to Mr Rose, Mr Spark, and Mr Milne to attend in order to examine and converse with the candidate previous to his being presented. The above-named persons attended here this day and assisted at the Ordination of the said Mr Moir."

The Rev. David Moir was afterwards, in 1837, consecrated as coadjutor to Bishop Gleig in the See of Brechin, and succeeded him on his death in 1840. Bishop Moir's son, Dean W. Y. Moir, told Canon Christie, Incumbent of Stonehaven (1911) a story, which is corroborated by the Bishop's granddaughter, Miss Moir, at present (1912) of Newport,

<sup>11</sup> Chap. iv. p. 29.

Fife, to the effect that the friendship between Bishop Watson and Mr Moir became so close that the people of Laurencekirk used to say, as they saw them together: "There go *David* and *Jonathan*!" Miss Moir says that her grandfather was born in 1777, so that he must have been in his twenty-third year, when he was ordained Priest. The Brechin Register also contains the following entry:—

"On December 7th, 1800, Bishop Watson, acting for Bishop Strachan of Brechin, advanced the Rev. Patrick Cushnie to the Priesthood at Montrose."

(d) We saw at the beginning of Chapter X. that in 1787 Bishop Watson was succeeded at Blairdaff by Rev. James Morrison. This Presbyter was present at the meeting of the Aberdeen Diocesan Synod of April 8th, 1788,<sup>13</sup> and on August 30th, 1790, Bishop Skinner addressed a letter<sup>14</sup> to the "Rev. Mr Morrison at Blairdaff." The following extract from a communication from Bishop Watson to the Rev. A. Cruickshank, dated from Laurencekirk, October 8th, 1799, shows us that he had now fallen into such a condition as to have become the object of pity and of charitable exertion:—

"I take the very first post to-day to acknowledge the favour of your letter, enclosing a guinea for poor Morrison. It shall be faithfully applied to his use and, though he himself cannot thank you, yet I trust you shall not lose your reward. He has become so unmanageable of late, that it has become absolutely necessary to apply for a cell to him in the Montrose Hospital, and I expect every day to hear that he is admitted. As soon as that is the case, I mean to go and do what I can with the keeper of the Hospital to secure humane usage towards him.

"We have got nearly as much as will get him kept for a twelvemonth and Bishop Skinner, or he and I together, must become bound to the Managers for payment."<sup>15</sup>

(e) It is true that Bishop Watson was Diocesan only of Dunkeld, and not of Dunblane, but, as the latter was vacant and Mr Cruickshank of Muthill the only clergyman in it, our

<sup>13</sup> Ep. Chest 1156.

<sup>14</sup> Ep. Chest 1448.

<sup>15</sup> Cr. MSS. XLII.

Prelate evidently administered the Diocese as if it were his own. The following extracts show that he was familiar with the Muthill people both in their homes and in their Church:—

“ You will forgive me for not putting this letter<sup>16</sup> under cover to Lord Perth, when I tell you that I have done so with one already and that it has never reached you. Before I had been eight days at home, I wrote you, as I promised to do, and sent it covered, as you had directed me to ‘The Right Hon. Lord Perth at Drummond Castle by Crieff,’ and I cannot say but the fate of my letter gives me some uneasiness. It is true it contained nothing unfit to be seen by people of sense, breeding, or discretion. Yet I certainly would not have wished it to fall into the hands of servants at Drummond Castle.”<sup>17</sup>

He surmises that in Lord Perth’s temporary absence “the letter might be either designedly made away with, or mislaid through carelessness.”

“ My best respects to Orchill and Miss Graham and to Mrs Drummond and Miss Oliphant. I saw Sir William Stirling’s death in the newspapers and thought it would make a blank in your congregation. I remembered with some tenderness that I had used his Prayer Book in your Chapel.”

And the following, taken from a letter to Mr Cruickshank dated March 22nd, 1806, also conveys the impression that the Bishop used to include Muthill in his occasional visitations:—

“ Finding Duncan Brewster going towards your quarter, I am very glad to take the opportunity to enquire after you and your worthy neighbours in Strathern, whose attention and hospitality, I do very gratefully remember. I hope that such of them, as I had the pleasure of seeing, continue in the land of the living, and in an ordinary measure of health, especially Sir Thomas Stirling and his niece; Orchill and his family and the honest writer of Auchterarder, to each of whom I beg my best respects, when occasion serves. I am also under obligation to Gen. Drummond and to the family of Abercairney, of whose kindness I had it not in my power to avail myself. Mrs Master-

<sup>16</sup> Cr. MSS. XLII.

<sup>17</sup> Cr. MSS. XLVII.

son was supposed to be in a dangerous decline; is she yet alive, or has her distress taken a favourable turn? "

In the absence of all official entries in the *Dunkeld Register*, it is disappointing that no unofficial notices, such as the above, of the Bishop in circuit in his own Diocese, survive. It makes the foregoing from the Diocese of Dunblane all the more welcome, and, as the second of these extracts presents us with a glimpse of him, Prayer Book in hand, worshipping in the Muthill Chapel, it may be appropriate to recall the fact that it was not until well on in his successor's time that the Bishop of Dunkeld wore the rochet and chimere. He himself, like all the other Scottish Bishops of the eighteenth century, would officiate in a black gown (with the addition of a cassock to distinguish him from a Presbyter).<sup>18</sup>

(f) In 1799<sup>19</sup> serious trouble fell upon the Bishop's old congregation of Banff.

As we saw, while he was Incumbent there, he had the inconvenience of the existence of an English, or Qualified Congregation side by side with his own. The Pastor of this was the Rev. Charles Cordiner.<sup>20</sup> In 1792, however, on the passing of the Penal Law Repeal Bill, which followed upon Mr Watson's removal to Laurencekirk and the settlement of the Rev. John Skinner as his successor in Banff, a union was effected between the two congregations. Both the Presbyters became colleagues under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Aberdeen, and worked most harmoniously together. But in 1799 a certain David Cumming, Captain of Marines, contending amongst other things that "the Scottish Bishops are no Bishops, because they preside over a Church which wants the sanction of the civil establishment," brought an action against the Vestry before Lord Meadowbank in the Court of Session. In a letter to the Rev. A. Cruickshank,<sup>21</sup> dated October 8th, 1799, Bishop Watson

<sup>18</sup> "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 118. Neale's "Torry," p. 82. "Scotichronicon," Vol. vi. p. 353. I make the statement about the cassock on the authority of the late Canon Bruce of Culross.

<sup>19</sup> On p. 221 of his "Life of Bishop John Skinner," Dean Walker puts this incident in 1805, but Bishop Watson's original MS. letter describing it is dated October 8th, 1799. Both W. and "T. S." (p. 474) were probably misled by the fact that *Bishop Skinner's letter describing the occurrence*, as given in "Annals," pp. 376-9, is dated 1805.

<sup>20</sup> "Annals," pp. 242-6, 376-386.

transcribes at length both the judgment given in the case and the note appended by the judge. In the former, decision is given in favour of the Vestry and against Captain Cummings in these words:—

“ *Finds* that the Suspenders [i.e. Captain Cummings] have not sufficient interest to challenge the proceedings they complain of and therefore *Finds* the Letters orderly proceeded and decerns.”

The judgment, however, goes on to clear Captain Cummings from costs:—

“ But in respect it appears to the Lord Ordinary that the Suspenders have been actuated by very laudable and public-spirited motives. . . . *Finds* no expenses due . . . Signed, ALLAN MACONOCHE.”

In the note appended his Lordship explains why he dealt so leniently with Captain Cummings as to free him from the costs, and saddled the innocent and poor congregation with a debt of £200 for legal expenses, and he gives as his reasons:—

“ A jealousy . . . of an old leaven of disloyalty, still lurking among that body of Dissenters, who call themselves the Episcopal Church of Scotland: a like jealousy of an ecclesiastical body of a hierarchic form and self-elected and which arrogates to itself a territorial jurisdiction over Scotland, while it denies the King’s supremacy over itself,” etc. etc.

The reader who has perused the preceding pages dealing with the policy of the Church since 1788, eleven years before this judgment was given, may form his own opinion of the fairness of it. Bishop Watson’s comments are as follows:—

“ Such is the light, in which we are viewed by Lord Meadowbank. But he is a Presbyterian, otherwise he could not be so ignorant of Diocesan Episcopacy! He is also a metaphysician and, I am told, a sceptic, otherwise I do not think he could have shewn such malignity! We are vexed to the heart at this most unjust and unfair representation of us; and the more so, as any attempt to show that we have been grossly misrepresented might only serve to make bad worse by making that public, which is yet perhaps known

but to few. However, each of the Bishops at the desire of the Primus, have given him their opinion and I suppose he will venture to expostulate a little with Lord Meadowbank. . . . He, Who is Judge of all, knows that we are wronged. May He plead our cause!"

Yes, the law had been ingenious enough to give judgment in favour of the united congregation, and at the same time to ruin it. But a *Deus ex machina* in the shape of twenty-two English and two Irish Bishops appeared, at the instigation of good Bishop Horsley, and sent the Primus £300 out of their own pockets to meet the case!

(g) In the last year of the eighteenth century (September 12th, 1800) we have another glimpse of the Bishop's activities, not however in his own Diocese. Writing to the Rev. A. Cruickshank, he first makes quite a touching apology for having failed to acknowledge the receipt of a further donation for poor Morrison, and then goes on<sup>22</sup>:—

"If it *could* be of any use to keep me from forfeiting your long and tried friendship, I would tell you how greatly I have been taken up since the month of June. Besides other matters, with the detail of which it is needless to trouble you, I have had to confirm for Bishop Strachan week after week in different congregations of his Diocese. On the Thursday morning after the General Meeting [i.e. of the Friendly Society] I left Aberdeen and rode to Muchals to breakfast, where I found Mr Bruce and Mr Lowe; there was a Confirmation in the forenoon; they were asked to stay dinner and agreed to do so, though they determined to sleep at Laurencekirk. After dinner they set out, and I, out of mere politeness (because they were going to *Laurencekirk*) set out with them. The cold of the evening caused a sudden obstruction of perspiration, and the consequence was an attack, which I have laboured under ever since and am not yet sound."

(h) In the letter of September 20th, 1800, to Mr Cruickshank, the Bishop says<sup>23</sup>:—

"I was very sorry for the fate of Alloa house and suppose it was matter of very general regret."

<sup>22</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIV.

<sup>23</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIV. p. 3.

What is the meaning of this? In order to discover it, let us remember, first, that in the eighteenth century the "Episcopal" chapels were called "meeting-houses," as having been originally built as temporary structures in view of the hoped for restoration of the Stewarts and of return to the Parish Churches. We thus see that it is the *Chapel* at Alloa to which Bishop Watson is alluding. Next, however, what fate of a regrettable kind had befallen it? Here let us remember that so long ago as 1775, when Bishop Alexander was *ab agendo* and Mr Cruickshank had just been brought to assist him, there had been some talk of a split among the Church people and the formation of a "Qualified" congregation, and that, when Mr Cruickshank moved to Muthill in 1783, Bishop Petrie had written to him on December 7th of that year<sup>24</sup>:—

"I am greatly against them [i.e. the good folks at Alloa and Airth] being united to any other Congregation, so long as they are able to maintain a Clergyman among themselves."

which shows that there were some who doubted whether they were strong enough to maintain their separate existence. If we remember all that, it seems plain that Bishop Watson's lament over the fate of Alloa House means that Mr Rhind had not succeeded in keeping things together, but that in the last years of the century—say 1799 or 1800—the congregation had lapsed. And our surmise is turned into a certainty when we find Dean Walker informing us<sup>25</sup> of "the setting up of a new Congregation at Alloa in 1807." It was set up by the Rev. Michael Russell,<sup>26</sup> afterwards Bishop of Glasgow, but at that time Curate to our friend Mr Gleig<sup>27</sup> (settled since 1787 at Stirling), coming over and recommencing service in what was formerly Bishop Alexander's, the Rev. A. Cruickshank's, and the Rev. J. Rhind's charge. But it stands to reason that, if a new congregation was set up at Alloa in that way in 1807, the old congregation must have lapsed. And that is obviously "the fate of Alloa House," which Bishop Watson laments in his letter of September 20th, 1800.

It was discouraging work for the worthies of those days. They struggled hard and with unselfish devotion to preserve

<sup>24</sup> Cr. MSS. XXVIII.

<sup>25</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 232.

<sup>26</sup> "Three Churchmen," p. 14.

<sup>27</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 209.

the Church, but her walls seemed to be everywhere mouldering away!

Amid his public anxieties the Bishop had the private consolation of continuing to have his mother with him. She still, he says, "holds out pretty well."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIV. p. 3. She survived him.

## CHAPTER XVII

### 1801-1806.—UNION OF THE NONJURORS AND THE QUALIFIED

THE opening years of the nineteenth century at length saw the healing of that schism, which, brought about by the political troubles of the previous century, had been a fatal weakness to the Episcopal cause in Scotland.

It was not Bishop Skinner's fault that this happy consummation had not been already reached. As we have seen in Chapter XV, he had tried in 1792 to induce the Church to accept such doctrinal and liturgical reform as, lying within the competence of a national Synod, would in his judgment have been sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the Repeal Bill and pave the way for reunion with the "Qualified" congregations. His attempt, however, had failed. The Scottish Clergy had been taught to regard the Thirty-nine Articles as Calvinistic, and could not all at once bring themselves to sign them; their "English" brethren were full of notions about being a part of "our happy Establishment in Church and State" and were averse to throwing in their lot with a disestablished communion; and last, but not least, the Primus's proposals had become mixed up with the personal misunderstanding which existed between him and Dr Gleig.

But now the flight of almost another ten years seemed to have rendered the prospects of the movement more propitious. In reply, indeed, to some questions on the subject put to him in his own Synod of 1801 he said that<sup>1</sup>

"He and the other Bishops of Scotland had hitherto been kept back from addressing the English Episcopal Clergy on behalf of themselves and those of their Communion, from motives of delicacy, as they were uncertain whether or not it would be acceptable and how it might be done with best effect."

<sup>1</sup> "T. S.," p. 457.

But the arrested current was undoubtedly flowing again. Accordingly several of the English Clergy having actually come in, but others, such as Dr Sandford, Dr Lloyd, Mr Alison, and Dr Morehead<sup>2</sup> in Edinburgh, having expressed hesitation until such time as the Thirty-nine Articles should be accepted by the Scottish Church, the Primus consulted the Episcopal College<sup>3</sup> on the advisability of convening a general Synod to deal with the matter; and, having found support from them, he summoned a Convocation at Laurence-kirk for September 11th, 1804. The proceedings of the assembly were begun with Divine Service, at which the Bishop of Dunkeld officiated.<sup>4</sup> Prolonged debates followed, and, it having been made clear, especially by Bishop Jolly, that the Thirty-nine Articles were not at all so Calvinistic as was popularly supposed,<sup>5</sup> the Clergy agreed to sign them (October 24th, 1804) and the delighted Primus went home with the precious parchment of signatures to deposit it safely in the Episcopal chest in Aberdeen.

It was a turning-point in the history of the Scottish Church, for now, not only was that Communion provided with a doctrinal standard, such as we have seen Bishops Skinner and Watson anxious to secure twelve years previously and such as would tend to restrain errors in a Church in which there had hitherto been no formula of the kind, but with a doctrinal standard, which, in the first place, fulfilled the conditions requisite for the enjoyment of the benefits of the Repeal Bill, and, secondly, paved the way for reconciliation with the separated congregations.

The "Qualified" Clergy immediately began to come in, and, as Bishop Abernethy-Drummond, the "hasty and resolute" Doctor, "with a zeal and humbleness of mind, which would have done honour to any Prelate of any age,"

<sup>2</sup> *Dr Sandford* was Incumbent of Charlotte Street Chapel until his removal to St. John's in 1818. See his "Memoirs," Vol. i. p. 28 (Edinburgh: Waugh & Innes, 1830). *Mr Allison* was Senior Incumbent of the Cowgate Chapel and author of the "Essay on Taste" (Bp. S.'s "Memoirs," p. 52). *Dr Morehead* was firstly Incumbent of the Leith Chapel and then Junior Incumbent of the Cowgate Chapel. He was no mean poet, as is evident from the hundred and thirteen sonnets published in his "Memoirs" (Edmonston & Douglas, 1875). He was Dean of Edinburgh, 1818-1832. *Dr Lloyd* succeeded *Dr Morehead* at Leith. He was Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge ("T. S.," p. 476).

<sup>3</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> "Lawson," p. 356. "T. S.," 465.

<sup>5</sup> "Grub," Vol. iv. pp. 117-8.

had resigned the Diocese of Edinburgh,<sup>6</sup> a mandate was issued by the Bishops for an election in the hope that Dr Sandford, one of the "English" Clergy, might be chosen. In connection with this mandate we have the following letter from the Bishop of Dunkeld to a correspondent in Dundee, whose name is not recorded<sup>7</sup> :—

"LAURENCEKIRK,  
"Dec. 10, 1805.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—The Clergy of Edinburgh having applied to the Bishops for a mandate to elect a Diocesan, their request has been most readily complied with and the mandate signed by the Primus, Bishop Macfarlane, Bishop Jolly, and me, and is to be forwarded to Bishop Strachan [in Dundee] along with this. I have a request that, as soon as this reaches you, you will go to the Bishop's and assist in getting it signed<sup>8</sup> and sent off without loss of time to Bishop Abernethy-Drummond. Bishop Strachan's name stands immediately above mine. I have farther to request you that you will keep the whole affair secret, as the Bishops have a particular reason for their wishing to have it kept so for some time and they have no doubt of your ready compliance with their wish. I write this in great haste, being desirous of not losing a post. I recommend you to God's blessing and am, R. and D. Sir,

"Your affectionate Brother

"JONATHAN WATSON."

Acting on this mandate the united Scottish and English Clergy of Edinburgh unanimously elected<sup>9</sup> Dr Sandford on January 15th, 1806. It was a most auspicious event, and preparations were at once made to consecrate the elect in Dundee on Sexagesima Sunday (February 9th). The gathering of the Bishops is thus described by Bishop Watson in a

<sup>6</sup> "T. S.," pp. 443-447. He died in 1809 aged eighty-nine. "T. S.," p. 483.

<sup>7</sup> To be found in the appendix of a pamphlet entitled "Peculiarities of the Scottish Episcopal Church," by Justitia. Aberdeen: John Avery, 1847.

<sup>8</sup> It is evident from the fact that Bishop Watson had lately been taking Bishop Strachan's Confirmations and Ordinations that the latter was now an invalid. (See Chap. xiv. c. g.)

<sup>9</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 214.

letter addressed to the Rev. Alexander Cruickshank on March 22nd, 1806<sup>10</sup> :—

“The journey towards (Dundee) was extremely difficult. It was bad enough to me, but I struggled on horse-back attended by a strong countryman and a very strong work-horse to break and splash before me, a roundabout road of thirteen miles to Montrose and was lucky enough to get a place in the mail-coach. The Primus came the whole way in a post-chaise with much struggling. But neither horse nor chaise could help honest Bishop Jolly a third part of the way from Frazerburgh to Aberdeen. He actually performed the greater part of the journey on foot, assisted by four men and sometimes by six. At Aberdeen he found a place in the mail-coach and got to Dundee on Saturday morning.”

And so the first English Bishop in Scotland in modern times was duly consecrated. Here is Bishop Watson's account of the event<sup>11</sup> :—

“You would hear, I presume, of the appointment, which took place at Dundee on the 9th of last month and of the purpose of it; at least if you have any intercourse with Mr Walker [of Perth] he would inform you that Dr Sandford was consecrated Bishop of Edinburgh by the Primus with Bishop Jolly and me [Bishop Strachan being evidently too poorly to be present] and that Mr Fenwick on that occasion subscribed the Articles of Union along with Bishop Sandford. It is but justice to say that we were all of us very much pleased: he appears indeed to be a man of apostolic manners and conversation and I trust his consecration will be productive of the most beneficial consequences.”

At the end of the Consecration Service, after a sermon by the Rev. James Walker,<sup>12</sup> the Primus read a long address “with an energy and feeling that sensibly affected the whole auditory,” in which, after congratulating the newly consecrated Prelate and the Clergy, over whom he was to preside, he turned to the Bishops of Dunkeld and Moray with these words<sup>13</sup> :—

<sup>10</sup> Cr. MSS. XLVII.

<sup>11</sup> Cr. MSS. XLVII.

<sup>12</sup> Afterwards Bishop of Edinburgh.

<sup>13</sup> “Annals,” pp. 407-8.

“Nor can I refrain, my right reverend colleagues, from extending my congratulations to you on the acquisition to our sacred order of one so worthy of the office, to which you have assisted in promoting him, and so justly entitled to the best thanks, the warmest approbation, the most cordial support, that we can give him, in return for his giving himself to the work of our Ministry and to the cultivation of the same humble portion of the Lord’s vineyard in which we have been appointed to labour; thus making our little national Church his own, and agreeing to co-operate with us, as we are ever disposed to co-operate with each other, in promoting its best and truest interests.”

An appropriate conclusion to this chapter, as giving the extent of the Scottish Episcopal Church at this important time, will be found in the following quotation from a letter which, at Bishop Horsley’s suggestion, the Primus addressed on March 16th, 1806, to the Archbishops and Bishops of England<sup>14</sup>:—

“The congregations, which compose all that remains of the old established Church of Scotland are at present about sixty in number and are supplied by fifty clergymen ordained by the Scottish Bishops, a few of these congregations being at this time vacant. . . . A few years ago there were about twenty-four congregations in Scotland in a state of separation from the Scottish Episcopal Church, and supplied by clergymen of English or Irish ordination, with no other Episcopal connection than what their ordination and the use of the English Liturgy afforded. Thirteen of these congregations have of late joined the communion of the Scottish Episcopal Church, sensible of the anomalous state in which as Episcopalians their being in communion with no Bishop placed them. . . . On the whole, it appears that thirteen clergymen, ordained by English or Irish Bishops, now form a part of the Ministry of the Scottish Episcopal Church and it may be hoped that the other eleven will, sooner or later, see the propriety of adopting the same salutary measure.”<sup>15</sup>

To this quotation from (Forfar) Skinner’s “Annals,”

<sup>14</sup> “Annals,” p. 419.

<sup>15</sup> The writer of the “Annals,” adds in a note:—“In 1818, the congregations continuing in a state of separation are reduced to five only of the above list.”

giving the number of Clergy and congregations we may add another taken from an article contributed by our friend the Rev. Roger Aitken to the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1792 (pp. 331-332)<sup>16</sup> giving the approximate number of communicants, which would be, roughly speaking, the same at the opening of the nineteenth century as in the year 1792:—

“In the Diocese of Aberdeen there are 5000 communicants; a number, which . . . is only 1000 less than the whole of the English communion put together. That 1000 and more (will be found) under any other of our Bishops. . . . That our hearers should be few and mean need not be wondered at, when the nature of the penal laws is considered, yet they are neither so few, so mean, nor so poor, as ‘Clericus’ says. We number among our people both the rich and the noble.”

## CHAPTER XVIII

### 1789-1808.—THE PERTH CASE

WE come now to the only Episcopal action by Bishop Watson within his own Diocese, of which any substantial record has survived. It took place in connection with that charge, namely Perth, to which in 1781 he had originally intended to be ordained.<sup>1</sup> As related at length in the present writer's "Episcopal History of Perth," a congregation had continued in that city since the Revolution, and, when Mr Watson in his youth intended to settle there, it was in the capacity of assistant to Dean Innes, who, having entered upon the charge at the conclusion of the rising of the Forty-five," was now waxing aged and infirm. After Mr Watson withdrew from his Perth undertaking and settled in Blairdaff, Dean Innes was in negotiation with the Simon Reid, whom Mr Watson met in Edinburgh,<sup>2</sup> but he, too, failed him, and the old man had to struggle on till 1786 before he was provided with an assistant. Mr William Jolly was then ordained Deacon by Bishop Rose at Doune on S. Peter's Day and settled in Perth, but he left in the following year. The Dean then secured the help of the Rev. David Low,<sup>3</sup> who was ordained Deacon on December 5th, 1787, but he too left almost immediately, being settled at Pittenweem in 1789. In the same year Dean Innes died and the next step was as follows:—

"The Rev. Alexander Walker, Presbyterian at Luthermuir in Mearns, having been invited to take charge of the congregation in Perth, now vacant by the translation of Mr Low to Pittenweem in Fife, was translated thither."

It is of Bishop Watson's Episcopal dealings with this Mr Walker and his congregation that we have a glimpse. In order that we may understand the position in which the Bishop and his Presbyterian were placed, it is necessary to remember

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Bishop of Moray, Ross, and Argyle.

<sup>4</sup> "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 219, and Dunk. Reg.

that, owing to a schism, which took place in 1742,<sup>6</sup> there was an "English" chapel in Perth, the pastor of which at the time when the Bishop wrote was the Rev. Adam Peebles,<sup>7</sup> who was beginning to receive the support of Lords Mansfield and Kinnoull,<sup>8</sup> who had hitherto been faithful to the Scottish Bishops, and had actually taken an active part in procuring the repeal of the Penal Laws in 1792. Writing to the Rev. A. Cruickshank on September 9th, 1800, the Bishop says<sup>9</sup>:—

"Have you see Mr Walker lately? If you have, he would no doubt inform you of a circumstance, in which we are just now considerably interested, namely the return of Lady Stuart of Grandtully to the Church through reading of the writings of the excellent Mr Daubeny.<sup>10</sup> This is some comfort for the part that Lord Kinnoull has been acting. If they were neighbours and on a good footing, perhaps she might have it in her power to open Lord Kinnoull's eyes a little, or anyhow to make him less of a dupe to Peebles and in consequence less hostile to us."

The Bishop's efforts, however, were, in the meantime, in vain, because at this juncture, when, as we saw in the last chapter, the cause of reunion was being everywhere pressed successfully on, the two noblemen, whom we have mentioned actually seceded (in 1802) to the "English" Chapel.

This, of course, was a serious blow to Mr Walker's congregation, which, having lately been under the charge of a palsied old man, assisted by young Deacons, who had each only stayed for little over a year, was already in a shaky condition. Finance, therefore, now became the pressing question. In 1803 the seat rents were as follows:—Whitsunday, £4, 17s. 6d.; Lammas, £3, 3s. 1d.; Martinmas, £16, 9s 11d. In 1804:—Candlemas, £2, 5s. 6d.; Whitsunday, £4, 2s 9d.; Lammas, £2, 13s. 0d.; Martinmas, £8, 1s. 6d.; Candlemas, £2, 0s. 6d. We are not surprised accordingly to find the following entry in the Minute Book (April 3rd, 1805)<sup>11</sup>:—

<sup>6</sup> See "Ep. Hist. Perth," Chap. xiv.

<sup>7</sup> "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 222.

<sup>8</sup> "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 235.

<sup>9</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIV. p. 3. (Not given in "Ep. Hist. Perth.")

<sup>10</sup> "A Guide to the Church," by the Rev. Charles Daubeny. London: T. Cadell, 1798.

<sup>11</sup> Kilmaveonaig MS. (Not given in "Ep. Hist. Perth.")

"In consequence of a letter received by the Rev. Mr Walker from Bishop Watson of date March 13th last, wherein he recommended to Mr Walker's congregation the propriety of entering into a subscription for the support of their Clergyman, a meeting was called to attend this day in the Church, when the said letter was laid before the meeting by Mr Walker. [Here follow the names of fourteen persons present.] The meeting unanimously agree to pay the following sums for the support of their Clergyman and the Chapel rent, and hereby oblige themselves to pay the same half-yearly at Whitsunday and Martinmas by equal portions, beginning the first half-year's allowance at the term of Whitsunday first." [Here follow subscriptions to the amount of £62, 7s. od.]

Moreover the Bishop had another comfort for Mr Walker. On October 16th, 1799, Bishop Horsley, that real friend of the Scottish Church, had written a letter to Bishop Abernethy-Drummond, in which, after expressing his preference for the Scottish Communion Office as "a very fine and edifying composition," and "lamenting the alterations that were made [in the English Book] to humour those who, we find by experience, will never be satisfied," he went on to give the following as his judgment concerning the English, or Qualified Chapels in Scotland:—

"My opinion is that the Episcopalian Laity in Scotland have now no excuse for not returning into the bosom of the Scottish Episcopalian Church. Their separation from it is a schism; and the English Clergy, officiating in the English Chapels and dissuading the return of the Laity, as I fear they do, to the Scottish Church, are guilty of fomenting schism."

This letter Bishop Watson sent to Mr Walker, who took a copy<sup>12</sup> of it, and doubtless the outspoken opinion of so distinguished an English Prelate would be an encouragement to him, amid his difficulties in Perth. Still affairs did not prosper. On March 22nd, 1806, the Bishop writes to the Rev. A. Cruickshank<sup>13</sup>:—

"I am very sorry that things go so cross for poor Mr Walker, but I cannot wonder at it, for even at the

<sup>12</sup> Cr. MSS. XLIII.

<sup>13</sup> Cr. MSS. XLVII. p. 2. (Not given in "Ep. Hist. Perth.")

age of forty he is little more than a boy. . . . Had-dington has paid no attention to his application, and, it seems, his own chapel, where it is likely he must be obliged to remain, wants a new roof, which cannot be given to it without a very considerable addition to the rent. All this he sets before me, as if I had funds of my own at his service, or could command the funds of the families in Perthshire. I would most gladly do something for him, if I could, for I have all along found that he can do very little for himself."

At last, however, a place was found for him. He left Perth and was settled at Monymusk in Aberdeenshire in the summer of 1807.<sup>14</sup> Moreover the Rev. A. Peebles died about the same time<sup>15</sup> and the Vestry of the "English" Chapel offered the living to the Rev. William Skinner, son of the Primus, because he had been ordained by an English Bishop. The Primus himself was too shrewd to be ensnared by the compliment, and replied that, as he had had his son ordained in England to show the full intercommunion of the Church of England with the *Scottish* Episcopal Church, he begged them to consider the propriety of coming under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of the Diocese.<sup>16</sup> But amongst the public an impression was created that the Vestry were in negotiations which would lead to their union with the Scottish Church. Accordingly, when they appointed the Rev. Mr Fenwick, whose congregation at Leith had just entered into the union, that Presbyter for his own part came to an understanding with our Bishop and, as we saw in Chapter XVII, signed the Articles of Union in Bishop Watson's presence at the consecration of Bishop Sandford in Dundee on February 9th, 1806, and twenty-one members of the Bishop's congregation placed themselves under his pastoral charge. And thus, although there was the significant fact that the Vestry had not formally committed themselves to union, Bishop Watson had the satisfaction of thinking that to all intents and purposes the two Perth congregations were united under his jurisdiction. (After his death, however, the sequel showed that he was mistaken. The Vestry stubbornly refused to recognize the Bishop of the Diocese, and continued in their schismatical position till January 8th, 1849.)

<sup>14</sup> Abdn. Reg. "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 238. He died on August 18th 1819.

<sup>15</sup> Register of S. John's, Perth.

<sup>16</sup> "Ep. Hist. Perth," p. 239.

## CHAPTER XIX

### 1806-8.—CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE SCOTTISH OFFICE—THE LAURENCEKIRK CASE—ILLNESS—DEATH

THREE of the great aims sought by the Episcopal Synod, which had assembled on the day of Bishop Watson's Consecration in 1792, were now accomplished. A doctrinal standard had been adopted; and secondly, that formula happening to be the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, the condition requisite for the Church enjoying the benefit of the Repeal Bill was fulfilled; and thirdly, the majority of the "English" Chapels had come under the jurisdiction of the Scottish Bishops, and one of the English Clergy had been consecrated Bishop of Edinburgh. History had been made in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

But there was still unrest on the liturgical question. True, there was an agreement to the effect that the Scottish Communion Office should continue in use as of primary authority, but that those who preferred the English service had the option of adhering to it. The official position was, therefore, clear and satisfactory enough. There were those, however, who now raised somewhat of an agitation on the subject. Some of them were outside, and some within, the Scottish Church. Of those outside, Dr Grant of Dundee, who still took up the "English" position, made the greatest disturbance<sup>1</sup>:—

He "responded to the call of union (says Dean Walker) by publishing a tract entitled "An Apology for Continuance in the Communion of the Church of England. . . . Dr Grant took a very narrow view of the matter, holding that the toleration of a different communion office made the Scotch a different Church from the English. He sent a copy of his tract to each of the English Bishops."

Of those within, there were certain of the junior Clergy, who also were in favour of dropping the Scottish Office.

<sup>1</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 221.

Their point of view is not difficult to understand. Here was their native Church no longer under the ban of the law, but basking in the light of the Act of 1792; here it was, no longer estranged from the great Church south of the Border, but united with the "English" Chapels in Scotland and receiving many acts of recognition and kindness from Churchmen beyond the Tweed, and very naturally a little pardonable vanity inclined them to "*Anglicize*" and to magnify the new English connection. Hence a distaste for the Scottish Liturgy sprang up in their breasts.

This double danger to his own Eucharistic Office, which he rightly conceived to "contain<sup>3</sup> a fuller and more accurate presentation of Eucharistic truth than the English did," at once aroused the Primus and many who sympathized with him, to undertake its active defence. Amongst those who rallied round him was the Bishop of Dunkeld, whose part in the matter is thus described by Dean Walker<sup>4</sup>:—

"On their way from the Consecration of Bishop Sandford at Dundee (February 9th, 1806) Bishops Skinner, Jolly and Watson stayed two days with Mr John Skinner at Forfar. The result of this visit was the publication by Mr Skinner of a pamphlet in defence and illustration of the Scottish Office. Whether it was the Bishops, or Mr Skinner, that suggested the publication, does not distinctly appear, but it is certain that the Bishops encouraged Mr Skinner in prosecution of the work, and that from this time he made rapid progress with it.<sup>11</sup>

"A few months afterwards (August 20th) the Annual Synod of Aberdeen was held, the triennial general meeting of the Friendly Society being summoned for the same time. Most of the members of the latter society, including Bishops Watson, Jolly and Macfarlane, being thus in Aberdeen at the time, attended the Synod and heard the Bishop's charge. The charge was something more than the usual yearly review of the general condition of the Diocese and of the Church. It was a northern manifesto. . . . The Primus made it very plain that he thought scorn of the Anglicizing Junior Clergy.

<sup>2</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 224.

<sup>3</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 225.

<sup>11</sup> "Bp. J. S.," p. 227.

‘The silly affectation’ of Anglicizing, he said, ‘if allowed to prevail in the minds of our Clergy, might tempt them to relinquish the use of our truly primitive Communion Office—for no other reason but because it is Scotch and has been found fault with by some, who either know nothing about it, or are evidently prejudiced against it.’ . . . The three Bishops joined with the Clergy of the Diocese in requesting the Primus to publish the charge. He did so, and appended to page 20 a note intimating that ‘A Clergyman of the Diocese of Dunkeld’ would in a few months publish a new edition of the Scottish Communion Office with a prefatory discourse.’”

In due course the harmless and very useful pamphlet was published.<sup>6</sup> The good friends, however, of the Scottish Church in England were so alarmed that at their earnest entreaties the Primus undertook that his son’s production should not be advertized south of the Border, and its sale was confined as much as possible to Aberdeenshire.

It will be remembered<sup>7</sup> that the Bishop held the living of Laurencekirk on terms of a deed of gift made by Lord Gardenstone, who built and conveyed to the Incumbent a Parsonage and three acres of land, and also burdened the estate of Johnston with £40 a year and forty bolls of oatmeal.<sup>8</sup> In the meantime, however, Lord Gardenstone had died and his son sold the estate, and the purchaser entered a suit to reduce this endowment. While this suit was pending, the Bishop, on March 22nd, 1806, wrote thus to the Rev. A. Cruickshank<sup>9</sup> :—

“Apropos here, it may be right to mention to you, in case you should hear it without doors in worse terms, that I myself am now involved in a perplexing affair. The new proprietor of Johnston and Laurencekirk,<sup>11</sup> who should have paid for the first time a part of my Income at Martinmas and my meal

<sup>5</sup> “Bp. J. S.,” p. 231.

<sup>6</sup> “The Office for the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, or Holy Communion according to the use of the Episcopal Church of Scotland with a Preliminary Dissertation,” etc., by the Rev. John Skinner. Aberdeen : J. Chalmers & Co., 1807.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xiii.

<sup>8</sup> “T. S.,” p. 481.

<sup>9</sup> Cr. MSS. XLVII. p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> James Farquhar. F.’s “Laurencekirk,” p. 257.

at Candlemas, has resisted hitherto. He has now at last proposed terms, by which he signifies his willingness to allow things to remain as they are during my time, if I will subscribe a deed acknowledging my income to be a gift from him, and thereby (I suspect), though it is not expressed in so many words, compromising the right of the Church to this Benefice, after I am gone. I am taking counsel just now, but how the matter will end, I know not."

As a matter of fact, it ended by the Court of Session confirming the deed of perpetual endowment. In view of the fact, however, that the Bishop, who had been brought up in deep poverty in his youth and could thus have inherited nothing from his parents, this blow aimed at his clerical stipend must have caused him considerable anxiety. But fortunately in the improved conditions of the Church he was not now, in his Episcopal capacity, wholly dependent upon his income as a congregational Pastor. The following extract will show how matters stood with him at this time":—

1806.—The London Committee, that had been so active and beneficial in the repeal case, again met together and were indefatigable in procuring subscriptions. Yet, after every exertion in both countries, the amount of collections only enabled the trustees to distribute £100 per annum to the Bishop of Edinburgh, £60 per annum to the Primus, and £50 *per annum to each of the other Bishops*. £15 to a very few, and £10 to some others, of the most necessitous Clergy."

But now we have reached the end. On March 22nd, 1807, indeed, the Bishop was able to attach his signature to the Episcopal resolution, by which it was agreed "that" the said District of Fife shall be annexed to the Diocese of Edinburgh, so long as it shall appear expedient to the Episcopal College to continue such annexation," his chronic infirmities, however, were beginning to close in upon him and during the year he found himself unequal to the discharge of his duties. A plan was therefore suggested by Mr Skinner of Forfar, according to which he might be provided with a coadjutor. The proposal was that the Rev. Patrick Torry should be moved from Peterhead in the Diocese of Aberdeen to the charge of Forfar in that of Dunkeld, and thereafter advanced to the Episcopate.

But the following reply,<sup>12</sup> from Mr Torry to Mr Skinner<sup>13</sup> gave pause to the prosecution of the scheme:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I was favoured with your very friendly communication in due course of post, and have allowed some days to elapse, before sitting down to answer it, that I might not seem to determine with precipitancy concerning points so serious and important as those contained in your letter. It is singularly gratifying to me to be assured that you entertain such a favourable opinion of me, as to think I am worthy of higher promotion in the Ministry; and I am abundantly sensible of your friendship in wishing to make such an arrangement as would naturally facilitate the accomplishment of that object.

“But, my dear sir, you are perhaps much mistaken, when you think that there are no difficulties as to what you mention but such as are of a temporal nature and regard my property in the town and neighbourhood of Peterhead. These might be surmounted, but those, which I am about to mention are of a more formidable nature. How do you know that in the case of a vacancy in the Diocese of Dunkeld, I should be acceptable to the Clergy and be the object of **their** choice? On the contrary, were it known, or even suspected, that I had removed to Forfar with a view to an eventual promotion to the Episcopate, it might **happen** that that circumstance would cause my brethren to look upon me with jealousy and not kindness and be the very means of defeating the plan proposed.

“But, supposing that I should be acceptable to the Clergy, is it clear that I should also be acceptable to the Bishops? Your friendly partiality makes you say so; but I suppose you say it only as a matter of opinion and not from any positive declaration to that effect.

“But the most insurmountable objection remains behind and it arises from a conviction that I am unworthy to be promoted to hold a seat in the Episcopal College. My high regard for the Church induces me to wish that only such men may be raised

<sup>12</sup> Neale's "Torry," pp. 54-5.

<sup>13</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 253.

to that dignity, as are adorned with such qualifications, as I am not possessed of, and probably never shall attain.

“ From all these considerations I must decline your proposal, with every sentiment of gratitude to you and such of your brethren, as may have concurred with you in making it.”

All plans, however, on behalf of the Bishop were brought to a final end by the occurrence of his death. The *Dunkeld Register*, which has helped us so little to a knowledge of his Episcopal acts, has this laconic entry :—

“ The Right Rev. Jonathan Watson, Bishop of Dunkeld, died at Laurencekirk June 28th, 1808, and was interred in the Churchyard there on July 4th.”

A table-shaped stone with a Latin inscription, records : the esteem in which he lived, and the regret which followed his death. The scroll was submitted to Bishop Skinner, who returned it unaltered with his hearty approval. The following is a translation :—

“ To the Very Reverend Jonathan Watson, Bishop of the Church in Scotland, distinguished for his piety and other truly evangelical virtues ; conversant with good literature and theology : firm of purpose : a most loving son, father, husband. Having discharged with faithfulness all the duties of his sacred office at Laurencekirk for seventeen years, he died much lamented on the 28th of January 1808 in his 46th year. His widow and mother in sorrow erected this monument.”<sup>14</sup>

The nearest approach to a description of his end which has come down to us is contained in the following extract from the “ *Annals* ”<sup>15</sup> of his friend the Rev. John Skinner, who, having followed him at Banff, had now been at Forfar since the death of Father Skene<sup>16</sup> there in 1797 :—

“ During the year 1808, the only event of sufficient importance to be submitted to the reader’s notice (is) the death of the Right Rev. Jonathan Watson, Bishop of Dunkeld. . . . Although cut off in the

<sup>14</sup> F.’s “ Laurencekirk,” p. 257.

<sup>15</sup> p. 468.

prime of life (an : aetat : 47) yet did Bishop Watson's death proceed from as complete prostration of strength and as much from bodily imbecility, as if he had reached that period of human life when all is labour and sorrow."

Concerning "this excellent man," as he calls him, Mr Skinner adds:—

"As he lived universally esteemed, so he died universally regretted."

Writing to Dean Robertson<sup>17</sup> of Dunkeld, Dr Gleig, who, as we have seen, was kept out of the Bishopric in 1792, although elected to it by the Clergy, through the pressure exercised by Bishop Skinner in favour of Bishop Watson, and who therefore might have been excused if he had not sung the deceased Prelate's praises, was generous enough to say:—

"I sincerely condole with you on the loss you have sustained by the death of Bishop Watson. I knew him well after he became a Bishop; and his manners and principles were such as very quickly to root out from my mind some slight prejudices excited by the singular mode in which he suffered himself to be elected by the See of Dunkeld."

And indeed the impression conveyed to the mind of the present biographer in the course of writing the foregoing pages is certainly pleasing. True, Bishop Watson had not the energy and initiative of Bishop Skinner; nor the unique saintliness and patristic learning of Bishop Jolly; nor the commanding and bold intellect of Dr Gleig, but he had qualities of his own, which endear him to us. Deepest perhaps in him was his reverent conservatism. This came out in his affection for his mother · his respect for the leaders of the Church, particularly Dean Skinner of Linshart, Bishop Petrie, and Primus Skinner; his lifelong friendship for Mr Cruickshank; and last, but not least, his evident instinct always in the first instance to cling to the opinions which he received from his elders, as may be seen in his early Jacobitism and Hutchinsonianism. Yet this innate conservatism was modified by a distinct capacity to yield to the logic of events. Thus, despite his Jacobitism, he did not follow his friend

<sup>17</sup> "Bp. Gleig," p. 223.

Bishop Rose into the irreconcilable position assumed by that Prelate on the death of Prince Charlie, but took the wise step of agreeing to pray for King George. Despite his early Hutchinsonianism, no later references to that system by him have come down to us. And, again, despite the fear and dislike with which, as a typical Scottish Churchman of that day, he at first regarded Dr Gleig on account of his supposed "broadness," we find from the Doctor's letter quoted above, that, after he became a Bishop, he lived on friendly terms with his former antagonist. Moreover, although he had not the intellectual distinction of Dr Gleig, yet his mental powers were above the average. That, living in a remote corner of the country, hampered by chronic ill-health and pronounced poverty, he was able at the age of twenty-six to compose the sermon,<sup>19</sup> which he preached at the Synod of 1786, shows that he was possessed of distinct ability. Again, although he may have been second to Bishop Jolly in saintliness, the Scottish Church can still be proud to have produced a man of his character. He was obviously unworldly. When he told his hearers at the Aberdeen Synod "generously to despise money," they were assuredly aware that the man, who had recently served three years at Blairdaff without receiving as much in return as would put a coat upon his back, practised what he preached and served the Church because he loved it. Nor would Mr Jolly have chosen him as the confidant to whom to impart the terrible secret that he was haunted by a longing to be a Bishop unless he had felt that his was a sincere and sympathetic soul. And lastly, although Bishop Watson had not the energy and initiative of Bishop Skinner, yet, as we have seen, he consistently gave the Primus valuable support. Altogether, therefore, Bishop Watson, "although not a great, was a good man," and it ought to be an encouragement to the Scottish Churchman of the twentieth century to find that such a character was a typical product of his Communion, in days when it was left (humanly speaking) to its own resources!

"He was of those of whom the earth  
Hears nothing; but the sheltered spot,  
Where God had cast His humble lot,  
Beheld in him soul-cheering worth."

<sup>18</sup> Neale's "Torry," p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> MS. at Perth.

## POSTSCRIPT

Writing from Inverness to the Rev. P. Torry on the Sixth Sunday after Trinity 1808, Bishop Macfarlane exclaims<sup>18</sup> :—

“ So my *old* friend and once intimate class correspondent, on what we deemed important subjects, Bishop Watson, is gone before me! His place must be filled up and the sooner the better and by all means, if possible, from the *old* stock, as I think.”

And since the reader may be interested to know both who was chosen to fill the vacancy and also how it ultimately fared with the much-rejected Dr Gleig, a short account may here be given of the election meeting held in accordance with the mandate of the Primus at Alyth on September 14th, 1808.<sup>19</sup> The first result was that Dr Gleig was elected by three to two. The second, however, was that, on its being represented by the minority that he was being intruded on the Bishops, some of whom (it was alleged) were committed to the scheme for the consecration of the Rev. P. Torry, he declined his election and asked his supporters to transfer their votes to Mr Torry. This they did and Mr Torry was consecrated. It was the last time, however, that the Skinner influence prevailed against Dr Gleig, for Bishop Strachan of Brechin being now *ab agendo* and the Clergy of that Diocese having met at Montrose on September 28th, he was once more elected and at last consecrated.<sup>20</sup> It is only fair to state that thereafter Bishop Skinner and he worked together on very friendly terms.

NOTE.—The following gives a bird's-eye view of the occasions on which Doctors Abernethy-Drummond and Gleig were respectively elected to the Episcopate :—

### DR ABERNETHY-DRUMMOND.

Clamorously called for by the Brechin Clergy, August, 1781.  
Formally desired as coadjutor by Bishop Falconar of Edinburgh, January 2nd, 1784.

Unanimously elected to Dunkeld, October 5th, 1786  
Elected to Brechin (and consecrated) September 26th, 1787.  
Elected to Edinburgh (and translated), 1787.

### DR GLEIG.

Elected to Dunkeld, October 25th, 1786.  
Elected to Dunkeld, August, 1792.  
Elected to Dunblane, 1792-3.  
Elected to Dunkeld, September 14th, 1808.  
Elected to Brechin (and consecrated) September 28th, 1808.

<sup>18</sup> Dunk Reg.

<sup>20</sup> “ Bp. Gleig,” pp. 258-262.

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## KEY TO THE REFERENCES IN THE FOOTNOTES MSS.

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- Cr. MSS.\*—The Cruickshank-Lendrum MSS., in Perth Cathedral Library.
- Dunbl. Reg.—The MS. Minute Book of the Diocese of Dunblane, in Perth Cathedral Library.
- Dunk. MSS.—The other loose MSS. in Dunkeld box, in Perth Cathedral Library.
- Dunk. Reg.—The MS. Minute Book of the Diocese of Dunkeld, in Perth Cathedral Library.
- Ep. Chest.—The MSS. in the Library of the Theological College, Edinburgh.
- Kilmaveonaig MS.—The Minute Book of the Perth Congregation, now at Blair Athol.

\*The numbers attached to these MSS. in the footnotes are those appended to them in the *copy* of them which I made in my own notebook.



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